Look for this year's Valley Holidays section inside of Valley Scene

VALLEY VOICE

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# Visalia City Council Requests Appraisal of CalWater

## *Council Cites High Rate Increases and Lack of Data Among Key Points*

**Staff Reports**

The Visalia City Council continues to be proactive in finding options for addressing water supplies and conservation. To ensure the community's well-being in the future, on November 12 the Council requested that an appraisal of California Water Service move forward. Visalia is the only city in Tulare County that does not own its water delivery system. Cal Water, a for-profit, utility-owned investment company, provides that service.

"In requesting an appraisal, the City Council wants facts that we and the community can consider. No decision to make an offer has been made. The Council is committed to a very public and open discussion so that local citizens can consider the facts and voice their opinion," assured Mayor Steve Nelsen. "But it needs to be just that, a local discussion about whether it makes sense to have more local control of this valuable resource. We don't think that discussion should be left to Cal Water in San Jose, or state commissioners in San Francisco."

| Regional Water Rate Analysis 2013 | |
|---|---|
| Jurisdiction | Monthly Rate (20 CCF) |
| Farmersville | $14.00 |
| Tulare | $15.48 |
| Hanford | $19.94 |
| Porterville | $20.56 |
| Sanger | $20.72 |
| Fresno | $22.23 |
| Clovis | $23.64 |
| Lemoore | $24.90 |
| Exeter | $26.25 |
| Dinuba | $27.12 |
| Woodlake | $28.00 |
| Visalia | $31.21 |
| Lindsay | $35.27 |
| Reedley* | $35.96 |
| Selma** | $46.62 |
| Corcoran* | $57.11 |

*Lindsay, Reedley and Corcoran have significant water quality issues.
**Selma's water service is also provided by Cal Water.

City Council concerns lie in Cal Water's continued high rate increase requests (current rate increase request is for an additional 29%), the lack of progress in meeting the state's

**WATER** continued on **11 »**

Wes Hensley. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

# Hensley Begins Permanent Position as Tulare Police Chief

**Nancy Vigran**

Tulare's new police chief was sworn in and began serving in his permanent position on November 14, after having worked as interim chief for nearly six months.

Naming Wes Hensley to the permanent position was an easy decision, said City Manager Don Dorman.

"His longevity with the department and as a captain; he was head and shoulders the choice," Dorman said.

Hensley has served Tulare PD since 1991, following a stint in the Visalia Police reserves and working in the Tulare County Sheriff Department.

While Dorman said he felt there were other qualified candidates, none of them have the longevity of Hensley.

Dorman chose not to seek applicants for the position from outside. Tulare has a history of promoting from within and the decision to do so again was Dorman's. As city manager, Dorman is responsible for filling all department heads.

"It was a choice of a known-quantity versus someone new, and unknown," he said.

Hensley said he is humbled by his appointment.

"I never honesty thought this was in my career path," said Hensley, who has about five years until he is eligible for retirement.

"This comes at very good time for me personally and professionally," he said.

The appointment became necessary following the resignation of former chief Jerry Breckinridge, who left following

**HENSLEY** continued on **4 »**

# FPPC Complaint Filed Against Tulare County Sheriff Boudreaux

**Catherine Doe**

Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux was elected in June of 2014, but questions about his campaign finance statements still linger. Marsh Carter, a Tulare County Sheriff lieutenant, filed a complaint with the Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) in August of this year. Carter's complaint is the latest in a series of complaints about Boudreaux' financial statements filed during his campaign and throughout his career.

Sheriff Mike Boudreaux.

Carter states, "I believe Mr. Boudreaux has purposely provided misleading information regarding numerous donations. Mr. Boudreaux has also failed numerous times to comply with California government codes and Fair Political Practice Commission regulations."

Carter's FPPC complaint is made up of three parts. The first concerns Boudreaux' campaign statements, or form 460, from January 1 to May 17, 2014. The second concerns Boudreaux' attempt to correct his mistakes on the amended campaign statements filed in July of this year. The third concerns Boudreaux' Statement of Economic Interest or form 700.

Carter states in his complaint that Boudreaux' quarterly 2014 statements from January through May had more than 200 mistakes. These mistakes included not disclosing addresses, employers and occupations of donors. The FPPC reviewed Carter's complaint and as a result sent Boudreaux a warning letter.

In the warning letter it states, "The FPPC has completed its investigation of the facts in this case. Specifically, the FPPC found that in several instances you failed to report the address for a contributor, or failed to include the occupation and employer information for a contributor… However since you immediately amended your campaign statements when contacted by the Commission staff we are closing our file on this matter."

The FPPC gives the candidate an opportunity to correct their mistakes before an advisory letter, warning letter, or fine is levied. After the FPPC communicated with Boudreaux

**BOUDREAUX** continued on **9 »**

# Furloughs Ending, Budget Woes Continue in Lindsay

**Dave Adalian**

McDermont Field House will stay open, furloughs for city employees will end on December 5, and the proposal to add a half-percent to Lindsay's sales tax is dead for now--but the city is still operating in the red and no plan to make up the gap is yet in the works as strife continues among members of the Lindsay City Council.

### Budget Crisis Ongoing

Currently, the city budget is running a deficit on the order of $490,000 annually, and the city is facing a cash crunch that led it to furlough workers two days a month starting in August. If a new source of revenue isn't found, the city could find itself issuing layoffs, scaling back its public safety spending, and even closing some of its facilities and reducing hours of operation at others.

"We have a deficit, and it's not going away," said Tamera Laken, the city's finance director. "Honestly, I don't see how we cannot take measures now to start closing this gap."

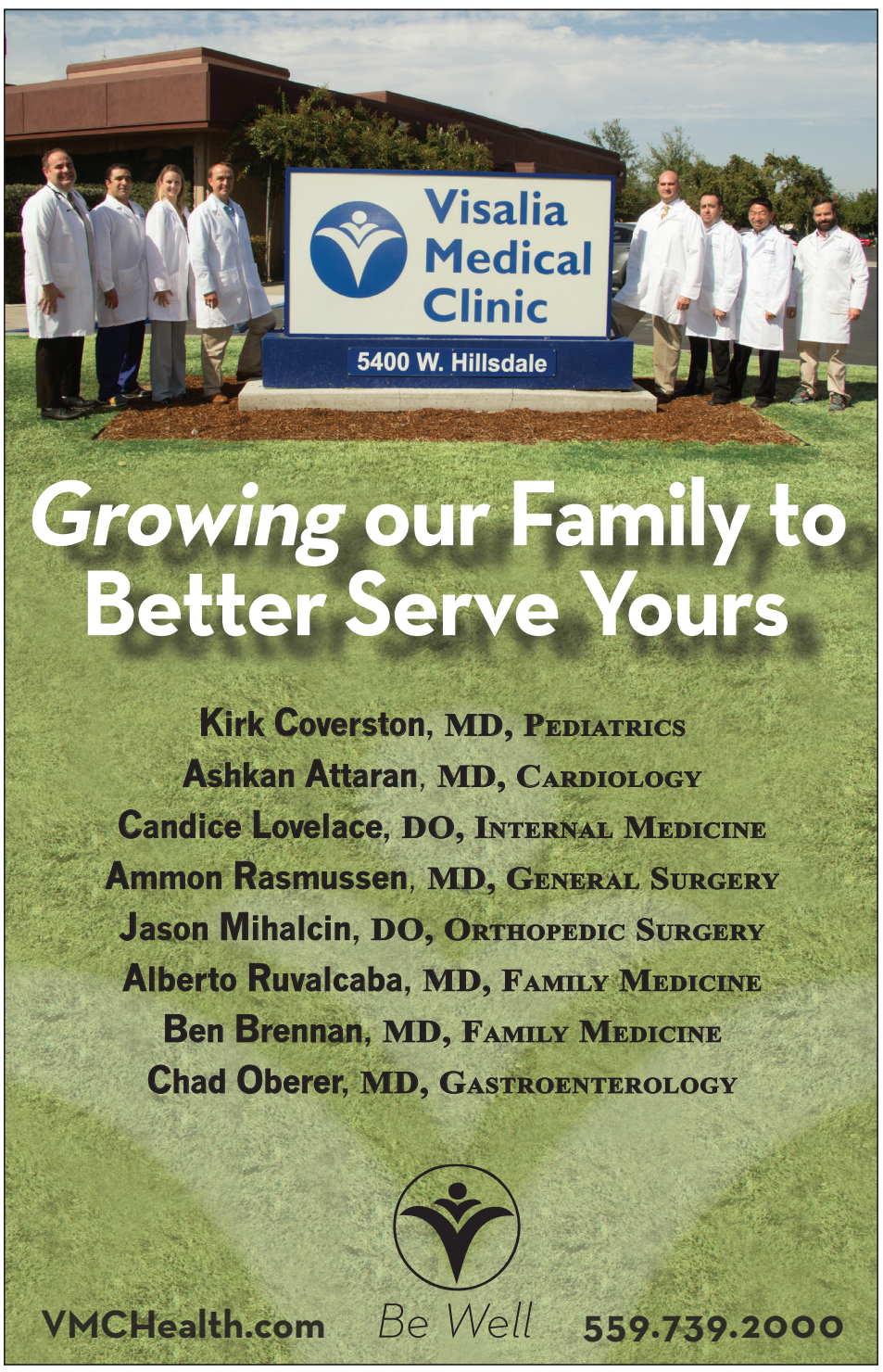
### Sales Tax Off Table

In September, the Council investigated the possibility of asking voters to approve a one-half-percent sales tax that would bolster the city's sagging general fund. Such a measure would require a simple majority for approval, and if it were passed would still leave a sizable gap in the city's budget. However, that plan was cut short when two members of the council, Mayor Pro-Tem Rosaena Sanchez and Steven Mecum, refused to support the idea.

"I'm against this, and I make no bone about it," Mecum said. "Government is needing more money to operate. If we do this, they're going to need more money. It doesn't stop."

Mecum claimed, despite his personal philosophy against raising any tax, that voters would not support increasing the local sales tax.

**LINDSAY** continued on **5 »**




FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

# This Is Our Pearl Harbor

By "our" I mean the world's, in its now--after ISIS' Paris attacks--international fight against "Islamic" terrorism. Note that I put Islamic in quotation marks. It seems to me there's nothing remotely Islamic--a word whose root, Islam, means, if I remember correctly, Peace--in terrorism. The United States, of course, has endured more than its fair share of terrorism, not least the 9/11 attacks: The Marine barracks bombing, the first Trade Center bombing, the attack on the USS Cole, the east Africa embassy bombings...

But other countries have suffered this barbarity as well.

Still, it took the well-coordinated November 13 attacks on the French capital for the world to properly, if finally, consider itself to be at war with ISIS. Nevermind what ISIS has perpetrated since its inception in its "own" territory. Nevermind its October 31 bombing, in the Sinai, of Russia's Metrojet flight 9268 that killed more than 200. Nevermind the ISIS bombings in Beirut, on October 12, which resulted in the death of 43 and the wounding of 239. Nevermind the roadside bombing ISIS undertook in Baghdad on October 13, killing 26 and wounding dozens.

The world is up in arms about the October 13 Paris attacks. Just look at Facebook, where many profile pictures peek out from an opaque French tricolor.

This reminds me of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Even today, every American remembers that it occurred on December 7, 1941--a date which FDR said, "will live in infamy." And it has. Yet Japan also--and virtually simultaneously--assaulted Guam, Wake Island, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Thailand. Who remembers that?

The Japanese strategy, at least, was sound from the perspective of its day: Cripple the US Pacific fleet in a single blow and--in the time it will take the US to rebuild it--consolidate and fortify their gains in Asia, using the Pacific Islands as a picket or perimeter. And it worked, in this context, mostly. Navies of the day were built upon the battleship, and all eight of our battleships stationed at Pearl Harbor were damaged. Four were sunk; seven were raised, and six eventually returned to service. Only the USS Arizona has remained on the bottom.

But the Japanese failed to recognize both the ascendancy of the aircraft carrier--none of ours were in harbor that infamous day-- and the industrial capacity of the United States. They wound up biting off more than they could chew.

So has ISIS, with the Paris murders.

In my November 5 column I wrote, "How long, I wonder, will it be before ISIS is able to mount some kind of attack distant from its own domain?" Now we know. After the capital of France, we can expect an attack almost anywhere--even here at home. And precisely because of that--because ISIS has mounted the world stage--ISIS should expect more of the world to stage attacks against it. This, surely, is more than ISIS can chew.

In the November 5 column I called for special forces to be arrayed in rotating missions from a carrier group each in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. I think now that we should add a third carrier group, and base it in the Red Sea. This will enable us to deploy covert missions--and air power--against ISIS from Libya through the Sinai to Syria and Iraq. Make no mistake: We are at war, and with a very slippery cast of characters. With no real state to contend with--no nation with borders--the enemy is a fluid force against which we must retain an elasticity of operations. I can't think of anything more effective than special forces supported by smart bombs.

We can't just intervene again, writ large, like the proverbial bull in a china shop. That, ultimately, leads nowhere--certainly not to a sustainable peace. We must be seen by Muslims to be combating those who have, historically, killed the majority of them--Islamic extremists.

Much as we did during World War II, when we adopted a "Europe first" approach, the priority in defeating these extremists must be in the Middle East. Only when they're six feet under can we turn our attention to Africa's Boko Haram and al-Shabab. Why? Because while the latter currently are containing themselves to Africa, they might not always do so.

The above is what I'd do as confronted by the war we are presently in. The prescription for peace is entirely different. It may begin with weaning ourselves off Middle Eastern oil--although that might result in the impoverishment of those countries who only have oil to offer the world--but it has to end somehow, without the West's intervening, in a reconciliation both between Sunni and Shia and between Israel and the Palestinians they displaced. Let's see where we can go from there.

*— Joseph Oldenbourg*

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# Political Fix

Catherine Doe

## Have You Seen the Picture of Ben Carson and Jesus Yet?

For anyone who hasn't had the time to keep a tally on Presidential Candidate Dr. Ben Carson's enlightening statements, no worries, I have them listed here. Consider it prep for Thanksgiving dinner when your crazy uncle, who listens to conservative talk show radio, starts his rants.

Some of Dr. Carson's comments teach us a little about ancient history."My own personal theory is that Joseph built the pyramids to store grain. Now all the archaeologists think that they were made for the pharaohs' graves. But, you know, it would have to be something awfully big if you stop and think about it. And I don't think it'd just disappear over the course of time to store that much grain."

Being a doctor he has had a lot to say about Obamacare. "Obamacare is really I think the worst thing that has happened in this nation since slavery." On a separate occasion, Dr. Carson suggested that Obamacare was worse than 9/11.

On social issues Dr. Carson is very sensitive. "How about we have a transgender bathroom. It's not fair for them to make everybody else uncomfortable." He also said that being gay is a choice, citing the example of people who go to prison straight and come out gay. "A lot of people who go into prison straight and when they come out, they're gay, so did something happen while they were in there? Ask yourself that question."

Concerning gun control he said, "I never saw a body with bullet holes that was more devastating than taking the right to arm ourselves away. Serious people seek serious solutions."

He has proven to be a scholar when it comes to foreign relations. Dr. Carson said on three different news shows, "the relationships go way, way, way, way back, you know? In the class of 1968 at Patrice Lumumba University in Moscow, Mahmoud Abbas was one of the members of that class, and so was Ali Khamenei. And that's where they first established relationships with the young Vladimir Putin."

How open minded of the 29-year -old Khamenei, the head of a theocracy, to go study in what was considered a Godless state – and to socialize with Mr. Putin ,who was only 16.

Dr. Carson was also asked about his lack of foreign policy experience and responded by saying his rivals had very little of their own. "When you look at the field of people — I don't know of anybody who has a great deal of foreign policy experience who's running for president right now," he said. In light of the recent ISIS attacks in Paris and the possible attacks that might happen here, what a cozy thought.

And thank God for Fox News. Dr. Carson said that Fox News is the only thing keeping the United States from becoming Cuba.

To wrap up Dr. Carson's nuggets of wisdom he said American "people are not as stupid as [the media] think they are. Many of them are stupid, OK. But I'm talking about overall,"

This comment coming from a man who can separate conjoined twins but doesn't seem to be able to separate fact from fiction.

## Is Dr. Ben Carson the Future President of the United States?

No, that's probably going to be Mr. Trump.

And last week we saw what a Trump presidency might feel like - "an unfocused rant which felt like it might never end."

Mr. Trump has had a few things to say about Dr. Carson since being edged out of first place. It's ironic that during Mr. Trump's 95-minute meltdown in Iowa on November 12, he accuses Dr. Carson of being pathological. Dr. Carson did describe himself as pathological, but that was while he was an adolescent boy, and we all know that's a reasonable assessment.

His pathological behavior was also before Dr. Carson's religious awakening. After a religious experience in his bathroom, Dr. Carson says he was forever changed. But Mr. Trump said, "It doesn't happen that way."

Most people would have to beg to differ with Mr. Trump on that. I personally have not found God in the bathroom, but I did find my pearl earring. Still, how many self-help shows have we seen where the guest found themselves on their knees in the bathroom and found God? Now we may have a president who did also.

How is it that these two are at the top of the Republican ticket? According to the *LA Times*, "Former Republican state Chairman George "Duf" Sundheim says he gets it. He gets why GOP voters across America are turning against establishment presidential candidates and siding with outsiders."

He says there is anger with the professional political class in both parties. "The politicians haven't delivered on their promises and the people are fed up," said Mr. Sundheim.

Though it's been a pretty fun ride, everyone can just calm down. Dr. Carson's chances to win the Republican nomination will evaporate with the Iowa primary. It isn't even a real primary and last year it took months for the Iowa State Republican Party to even figure out who won the "caucus." How many people actually vote in these caucuses anyway, a thousand? And why do we put so much weight on them? Most of the polls have been taken in Iowa and give an illusion of Mr. Trump's and Dr. Carson's popularity

But a thousand or so people's vote does not a president make. Especially a 1,000 people who think there is grain in the Great Pyramids.

## Who is Duf Sundheim?

Did anyone realize that three Republicans are running for Barbara Boxer's Senate Seat in 2016? One of them is Former Republican state Chairman George "Duf" Sundheim. California hasn't elected a Republican Senator since 1988, and that may be why no one has heard of the three Republicans running. Pete Wilson was the last California Republican elected to the US Senate in 1988, and the last Republican to represent California for a full term in the US Senate from 1983 to 1989.

The current California Attorney General, Kamala Harris from Northern California, is considered the front runner. Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez from the Southland is predicted to come in second. The two other Republicans running, besides Mr. Sundheim, are Assemblyman Rocky Chavez of Oceanside and conservative Tom Del Beccaro, another former state party chairman.

Mr. Sundheim has never held political office which means he can call himself an "outsider." Voters in both camps seem to like that term more than ever. Mr. Sundheim said that is why Mr. Trump, Dr. Carson and Ms. Fiorina are doing so well on the Republican side and whyVermont Senator Bernie Sanders is doing so well on the Democratic side.

What's Duf's strategy? To get the other two Republicans to drop out of the race and support him. He says that is the only way a Republican has a chance at coming in second during the June primary. It sounds like the only way for a Republican to come in second, but what is his strategy to win the general election?

He's counting on Californians, Republicans, Democrats, and Independents that want to rebel against "professional politicians," to vote for him.

The *Los Angeles Times* says, "Sundheim could credibly carry the party banner in California — while losing."

# County Awarded $2.8 Million for Safe Routes to School

**Staff Reports**

In an effort to increase the number of children who walk or bicycle to school, the California Transportation Committee (CTC), has awarded Tulare County $2.8 million in grants for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) infrastructure improvement projects. More than 600 projects from across the state of California were submitted with 90 being selected for funding, including two in Tulare County.

Steve Worthley

"Our county is committed to providing children with safe routes to school and these funds will enable us to begin work on projects guaranteed to make a difference in the everyday lives of residents in two of our most disadvantaged communities," said Chairman of the Tulare County Board of Supervisors Steve Worthley. "We are thrilled that the CTC saw sufficient value in our projects to provide the necessary funding to make these infrastructure improvements possible."

With approval from the Board of Supervisors, the Tulare County Resource Management Agency submitted grant applications in May, 2015 for eight projects under the Cal Trans Active Transportation Program (ATP) to construct SRTS safety improvements in the communities of Alpaugh, Matheny Tract, Earlimart, Goshen, Pixley, Traver, Lemon Cove, Richgrove, Terra Bella, and Woodville; totaling approximately $12 million in grant funds. Two of the eight projects submitted were selected for funding for a total grant award of $2,808,000.

County projects receiving funding are:

- Traver Jacob Street Improvements Project- $1,790,000- Approx. 2,100 LF of 8ft wide concrete sidewalk with curb and gutter on south side of the Jacob St. curb & gutter, asphalt pave outs, bike lane, drainage facilities, ADA Ramps, signs and markings will also be installed.
- Pixley Main Street Improvements Project- $1,018,000 Approx. 2,700 LF of 5ft to 8ft wide concrete sidewalk with curb and gutter on both sides of the Main St. curb & gutter, asphalt pave outs, bike lane, drainage facilities, ADA Ramps, signs and markings will also be installed.

Pete Vander Poel

"The need for safe routes in our disadvantaged communities is most certainly there, evidenced by the fact that our county was chosen as a grant awardee out of more than 600 applicants," said District Two Supervisor Pete Vander Poel. "Improved infrastructure is needed in our communities and I look forward to the enhanced quality of life our residents will experience as a result of these newly funded projects."

For SRTS funding consideration, projects must directly increase safety and convenience for students of public schools, or in the vicinity of a public school bus stop, to walk and/or bike to school. The purpose of the ATP is to encourage increased use of active modes of transportation by achieving the following goals:

- Increase the proportion of trips accomplished by biking and walking,
- Increase safety and mobility for non-motorized users,
- Advance the active transportation efforts of regional agencies to achieve greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction goals,
- Enhance public health,
- Ensure that disadvantaged communities fully share in the benefits of the program, and
- Provide a broad spectrum of projects to benefit many types of active transportation users.

For more information on the Active Transportation Program, please visit Cal Trans at: http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/LocalPrograms/atp/

# Supervisors Appoint Spata as New County Administrative Officer

**Staff Reports**

The Tulare County Board of Supervisors announced Tuesday that Michael Spata has been named as the permanent county administrative officer (CAO). Spata was appointed interim CAO on October 6, following Jean Rousseau's resignation from the position in September.

Tulare County CAO Mike Spata.

The County administrative officer is considered the most senior County employee, and is charged with preparing the County budget for Board approval and supervising the day-to-day business of the County, subject to policies set by the Board of Supervisors.

"The Board acted unanimously today to appoint Michael Spata as the Tulare County Administrative Officer," said Board Chairman Steve Worthley. "Mr. Spata's performance, both as director of the county's Resource Management Agency (RMA) and as interim CAO, has given the Board utmost confidence in his abilities as our continued leader."

Spata is no stranger to local government touting more than 38 years of public and private sector experience in administration, law and finance. Before being appointed as interim CAO, Spata served as the associate director and assistant director of planning at the county's RMA, before being appointed to Director of the agency on October 1, 2014.

Additionally, Spata has held various leadership roles in city and county governments including that of assistant chief administrative officer, interim city manager and city attorney. He has a BA in Government and Politics from the University of Maryland, a JD from Western State University and an LLM in Tax Law from the University of San Diego. Spata also received an MPA and MBA from California State University, Fresno.

"I am deeply honored to have been selected by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors for the position of county administrative officer," said Spata. "It is my intention to continue to serve the public by helping to ensure services are delivered efficiently and effectively. As such, I will be working closely with county agencies and departments to carry out a strategic management approach for the delivery of public services."

The County invited resumes from interested candidates throughout the month of October. After consideration of all applicants, the Board of Supervisors, along with the county's Human Resources and Development director, determined Spata to be the most qualified candidate for the county's top position. Spata will earn $185,000 annually.

Tulare FFA members Gwin Barnett and Grace Wilbur plant a flag on a veteran's grave on Veterans Day. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

# Tulare 4-H and FFA Members Honor Those Who Have Fallen

**Nancy Vigran**

On a holiday with a day off from school, many kids might sleep in, or spend the day at the skate park or mall. But for some 200 Tulare 4-H and FFA students, Veterans Day was a day to honor and reflect.

The students were up and at the Tulare Public Cemetery by 8am to place flags on the 2,200 graves of veterans there.

"My grandpa is a veteran," said FFA member Gwin Barnett, a freshman at Tulare Western. "This is a way to honor them."

"It's a way to honor the ones that served for our country," said fellow FFA member Grace Wilbur, also a freshman at Tulare Western.

"Imagine how many people in the county (served)," she said while looking around the cemetery, "and then the whole country."

The event is organized by Oakdale 4-H. All Tulare 4-H groups and Tulare FFA participate, but it is not mandatory. Students sign-up and for 4-H receive community service credit, while FFA members receive activity points.

"We have being doing this for more than 20 years," said Natalie Mederos, Oakdale 4-H community leader.

The group started putting out flags on veteran's graves because no one else was doing it, she said. It was something that needed to be done, she added.

"It makes you pretty proud – the response and what they're doing," said Jerry Ellis, a Vietnam War veteran. "This is the most patriotic area in California."

While not a native of Tulare County, Ellis has lived here for the past 10 years.

He feels it is important for people to remember all the wars America has fought in, not just the recent ones, or the World Wars, but Vietnam and Korea as well.

"We lost as many lives in Vietnam and Korea as we did in the others," he said.




# Hensley

Continued from p. 1

turmoil about his extended temporary leave of absence. Breckinridge said he resigned for personal reasons. His resignation became official on November 13.

While Hensley does not see making any immediate drastic changes to the department, he does feel there are some things that could be done to make the department more efficient, he said. Some of those things including the processing and handling of evidence, as well as enlarging limited storage space.

As a captain for many years, Hensley has played a lot of roles in department policy. One thing he would like to expand upon is community outreach, he said.

"I would like to see us have more of a presence in community functions," he said, "and work on creating a dialogue.

"I want to create an environment they (the public) are comfortable coming in, whether it is to come in and file a complaint, or ask a question."

The department is now "very actively" looking into the purchase and use of body cameras, and will be testing cameras in January, Hensley said.

"Cameras are a benefit to all of us," he said.

He added that he does not think it will be long until body cameras become a federal mandate.

Hensley is looking for cameras to outfit his 43 uniformed patrol officers, he said. His largest concern is that of storage and date recall.

The Tulare Police Department currently has 75 sworn policing positions. With Hensley's promotion, he will be looking to promote someone else to captain and backfill down the line to include the hire of a new patrol officer, he said. He plans to make these promotions soon.

Hensley is the father of four children and six grandchildren, most of whom live up and down the Valley. He enjoys competitive archery and heads up an archery program in the Tulare Police Activities League, which he plans on continuing. His students range in age from eight to 18.

"I've always had an interest in kids and in helping out," he said.

As for his new position as chief, "He will perpetrate a lot of the improvements the department has been working on," Dorman said. "He is very innovative and creative in how things are done to get the most out of the department."

# Lindsay

Continued from p. 1

### Chaos on Council

A Council discussion of the sales tax at its September 22 meeting broke down into an argument among council members, city employees and the members of the public. The Council eventually deadlocked 2-2 on the sales tax proposal, effectively killing it, as four-fifths of the council had to agree in order to place the item before voters.

"If we keep going the way we're going, we're going to end up like Mexico," Sanchez said as the discussion broke down into chaos.

"Right now, we're in a downward spiral," said Councilwoman Pamela Kimball. "If we keep cutting, you reduce services, you reduce hours, the city is less attractive, you reduce your property values, you get less that way, you reduce your sales tax. I mean it will just continue to spiral down."

### McDermont to Stay Open

The city's financial problems stem from loans used to fund city beautification projects before the financial crash of 2008, which caused a drop in property tax revenue, as well as from unexpected payouts to two former employees, Rich Wilkinson, the former city manager who departed earlier in the year, forcing the city to pay him a sizable severance package, and a former police officer whose wrongful termination suit against the city was settled out of court.

The focus shifted recently to the operation of the city's McDermont Field House, its main recreational facility, and the Wellness Center, and whether they should be shut down to reduce city costs. The idea brought an immediate and harsh backlash from the public, and the Council sought to distance itself from the idea.

"The last discussion we had in our last meeting was just that, a discussion on how to shrink, reduce the overhead that is diverted from the general fund to those two facilities," Mayor Ramona Villarreal-Padilla said. "That was what was in question."

She polled the members of the Council during its meeting October 27, and each of them indicated their desire to keep both facilities open. Even if they had been closed, there would be no savings for the city, as it would still have to make payments on the pair of loans it took to fund their operation.

### Tensions Run High

Meanwhile, the city remains without a city manager. Currently, Bill Zigler, Lindsay's city planner, is acting as interim manager. Discussion about hiring a replacement for Wilkinson at the October 13 Council meeting quickly broke down into talk about costs, savings and accusations of foot-dragging.

The bad feelings continued at the October 27 meeting, when dozens of citizens turned out to protest the possible closure of McDermont and the Wellness Center. The Council adamantly denied any plan to close the facilities, but still faced ire from those in the audience, who reminded them a Grand Jury investigation of allegations of improper action by members of the council is still underway and that a recall effort is being considered.

No decision was reached on beginning the search for a new city manager; however, a study session was set for November 16.

# Porterville Honors Citizens, Businesses

Porterville Chamber of Commerce held its annual award banquet on November 13, honoring outstanding members of the community.

Honorees included at the ceremony were:

**Man of the Year** - Jim Holly, a founder and current vice-chair of Bank of the Sierra. Holly moved to Porterville while working with a different bank, and decided it would be a good idea to base a bank there, so that he, his wife and family would never have to move due to his employment.

Holly has served as director of the chamber, on city council, on multiple banking industry boards, on the Sequoia National Park Foundation and with other charities.

**Woman of the Year** - Martha Flores, who has retired from her career with Porterville Unified School District. Flores is well-known for forming a business, teaching young men and women how to dress for success, while on a tight budget.

Flores has volunteered for and served on countless boards and projects including the Sierra View Health Care District, Sierra View District Hospital Foundation, Tulare County Domestic Violence Task Force, the Central California Family Crisis Center, Youth Services Advisory Board and the Tulare-Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

**Business of the Year** – R. M. Parks Incorporated, a gasoline, diesel and oil company that serves more than 300 locations in the South Valley. Named after its late founder, R. M. Parks remains a family-owned business, through son-in-law, Tim Callison, daughter Marilyn Callison and grandsons, J. P. Patterson and Jason Callison.

With its family orientation, R. M. Parks employs more than 65 families from around the South Valley.

**Volunteer of the Year** – Daren Griswold, a Porterville-native, has long donated his time to the community and designed its first Iris Festival logo.

Award winners, Habitat for Humanity's Deanna Saldana, Denise Marchant, Daren Griswold, James Holly, Martha Flores, Geovanni Suarez, and Marilyn Callison, Tim Callison, JP Patterson, and kneeling is Jason Callison from RM Parks Incorporated. Not pictured: The Female Student of the Year - Michelle Valencia Courtesy/Porterville Chamber

Griswold has served as the chamber board president, a chamber ambassador, Leadership Porterville chairman, president of Porterville Jaycees and served on the advisory board for Porterville Redevelopment.

**Community Service Project** – Habitat for Humanity, Tulare County for "Building Hope in Porterville." Habitat for Humanity, which was started by President Jimmy Carter, is a nationwide nonprofit helping to build and restore homes.

In Porterville, the Tulare County chapter has helped to rebuild homes, which homeowners themselves could not afford through "A Brush of Kindness."

Receiving the award for Habitat for Humanity, Tulare County were Deanna Saldana and Denise Marchant.

**Male Student of the Year** – Geovanni Suarez, a senior from Porterville High School, has a 4.2 grade point average. Suarez plays the trumpet in his high school band and plays football, basketball, soccer and softball.

Suarez has been very active in school clubs and outside organizations including serving as president of the California Scholarship Foundation, Porterville High Student Council, the Key Club and president of the Red Cross Club.

**Female Student of the Year** – Michelle Valencia, a senior from Monache High School, has a 4.26 grade point average, having made honor roll in six semesters in high school. Valencia has already taken several college courses and plans to pursue her education after graduation.

Valencia has attend the Environmental Science Academy and has worked with fifth-graders helping them to better understand science as well as working with them on their science projects.


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# Agriculture

Walnut grower Joe Turkovich of Winters stands before a block of his trees that have been trimmed lower to provide clearance for electrical transmission lines passing directly over the orchard. Steve Adler/CFBF

## Agreement Helps Trees, Power Lines Coexist

**Steve Adler**

In a model agreement aimed at allowing farmers to grow crops successfully under electrical power lines, the California Farm Bureau Federation has reached a resolution with the Western Area Power Administration that will permit orchard trees to be planted and maintained under and near the lines, under specified conditions.

The model will serve as a template for revisions to existing agreements between WAPA and landowners when there are

**POWER** continued on **8 »**

## Commentary: Consider Property Taxes in Succession Planning

**John Gamper**

The intergenerational transfer of the family farm can be both financially and emotionally draining. The tax consequences associated with loss of the patriarch and matriarch of the family can be so expensive that the heirs have to sell all or part of the farm or ranch just to settle up with the taxman. Equally challenging are the impacts on family dynamics when heirs have different financial expectations. Some may want to continue to work the land while others may want to cash out.

Books have been written and legal careers made on the intricacies of the federal estate tax and importance of succession planning. Many believe that with appropriate capitalization, adequate succession planning and good communication among the potential heirs, a family farm can continue to thrive for generations.

With property tax bills arriving recently from your county assessor, it's a good time to take a look at how California's property tax law can impact these involuntary transfers. I am not a certified financial planner or tax attorney, so what follows is meant as a heads-up to help ensure that you get the best advice from your succession-planning professional.

In November 1986, Proposition 58 won approval from three-fourths of California voters. This legislatively proposed constitutional amendment broadened the circumstances under which real property can be transferred between parents and children without triggering reassessment under the definition of change of ownership.

Proposition 58 applied to real estate transfers of the family's principal residence, regardless of value, and to a limited amount of all other real property. The limit on other real property applies to the first $1 million of assessed value, regardless of the number of properties transferred.

As you know, thanks to Proposition 13, assessed value can be significantly lower than market value, especially when land has been held for several generations. Both parents can combine their exclusions for a limit of $2 million, but any property transferred above the assessed value limit is subject to reassessment.

Two things must be remembered regarding the transfer of real property between parents and children:

**SUCCESSION** continued on **8 »**

## CCM Applauds Administration for Release of TPP Text

California Citrus Mutual applauds the Administration for its timely release of text specific to the proposed Trans-Pacific Trade Agreement. "While we have been briefed extensively on the content, reviewing the language is the last step before providing our unqualified endorsement," states CCM President Joel Nelsen.X

"We believe the Administration has negotiated an excellent agreement for California Citrus and most other California commodities. Tariffs are plunging as a result of negotiations, creating a more competitive and fair international marketplace."

With tariff reductions in Japan, Vietnam and Malaysia, California fruit can enter the marketplace at a more competitive price. Following the Uruguay Round agreement, citrus imports into the United States have exploded, whereas citrus exports from California have only minimally increased.

"California is by far the Nation's largest fresh citrus producer, and while we are confident we can overcome off-shore competition without subsidies, our opportunities in the world market have been nil.

"We're eager to look at the language and then offer our unqualified support to members of Congress," Concludes Nelsen.

Nelsen also serves as Chair for the Fruit and Vegetable Trade Advisory Committee which is comprised of 22 commodity leaders from across the country and offers counsel to USDA and USTR on all proposed trade agreements.

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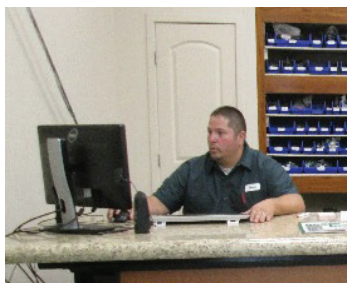

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Agriculture

# Closure of More Biomass Plants Reduces Options

**Christine Souza, CFBF**

Farmers who have removed orchards have fewer ways to dispose of the wood waste, as biomass power plants continue to close.

The closure or threatened closure of more California biomass power plants leaves farmers with fewer options for disposing of tree prunings or of trees uprooted during planned orchard removals.

"The last few projects that we've done, we've had real issues with orchard removal," said Mike Powell, field manager for Blain Farming Co., which grows pecans and walnuts in Visalia. Following the recent closure of plants in Terra Bella, Mendota and Delano, he said, "we literally have nowhere to take this orchard waste."

The problem centers on 25- and 30-year contracts between biomass plants and utility companies, established in the 1980s, that are now expiring and not being renewed, forcing biomass plants to close.

"The contracts were set for the first 10 years at a very high, fixed price to get the facilities built, and then the price would fall off into a market price," said Julee Malinowski Ball, executive director of the California Biomass Energy Alliance. "No one ever anticipated that the market price would be as low as it is because of the price of natural gas."

Covanta Delano Power in Delano announced in late October that it would no longer accept biomass fuel, such as orchard removals, prunings and nut shells, as it prepares to process its existing inventory, which will carry the plant through the end of the year when its power contract runs out.

Dennis Serpa, Covanta Biomass Fuels manager, said Dec. 31 will be the final day the Delano plant can operate unless it can acquire a new power purchase agreement. The plant has an annual capacity of about 340,000 dry tons of biomass.

"We have five plants in California and four are shut down. Delano would be the fifth. We can't operate on the prices offered for open market power at this point," Serpa said. "With biomass, there's a lot more costs involved, and we can't compete with natural gas and solar is heavily subsidized. But we offer a lot more than what other energies can do: We eliminate a waste stream that doesn't really have another home."

Consultant Matt Barnes of Grid Subject Matter Experts said there are about 30 biomass plants in California, including about seven that remain idle but operational. Absent further action by the governor, state Legislature or the California Public Utilities Commission, Barnes said, "another three plants will likely close by Feb. 1, 2016, and another five plants could close by July 1, 2016, as power purchase agreements expire."

The supply of orchard waste sitting on farms greatly exceeds what can be processed at the remaining biomass plants, and this backlog has delayed farmers from moving forward with planting plans. Powell reported a shortage of orchard-removal contractors, meaning farmers are put on waiting lists due to the high demand for this service.

"It is going to be difficult for farmers," Serpa said, noting rising costs.

He said orchard removal for almonds typically costs $250 to $350 per acre, but said he is aware of one company that now charges between $1,000 and $1,200 an acre, without removing the wood, leaving that up to the farmer.

Farmers now have fewer options for the disposal of uprooted trees and other wood waste with the closure of biomass power plants. Courtesy/CFBF

State air-quality regulations prevent or greatly restrict the open-air burning of orchard waste. Blain Farming Co. has attempted to find other uses for the waste, such as selling it to companies that make timber products and furniture, or to those that sell firewood.

With very few options left, Powell said, farmers are trying to learn more about the science behind what happens when wood is added to the soil, and what it means for orchard health.

Brent Holtz, University of California Cooperative Extension farm advisor for San Joaquin County, has been researching the impacts of grinding orchard waste and incorporating organic matter into the soil.

"If growers realize that they can incorporate the organic matter from a previous orchard—and that it will be beneficial to their soil's health in the long term—then I believe they will choose this option," Holtz said, "especially if cogeneration companies are no longer taking biomass and growers are faced with paying for the grinding and transportation costs that they didn't have to pay for in the past."

Holtz estimated that when an orchard is pushed out, it yields about 100 tons per acre of organic matter that could be added back into the soil.

"If wood grindings can be shown to not take valuable nutrients from trees and not worsen replant disease or interfere with harvest, then growers would be more likely to adopt grinding and incorporating as an alternative," he said. "So far, we have not observed a negative response to whole-orchard recycling—but that doesn't mean it will always prove beneficial."

Holtz cited positive results seen by Jerrad Pierucci, who used a tub grinder to grind a 1,200-acre pomegranate orchard in Madera County.

Pierucci, who farms almonds with his family in Bakersfield, used manure spreaders to spread the pomegranate orchard grindings back into the soil, and said they spread "very nicely and evenly."

In researching where to take orchard waste, Pierucci said, he called cogeneration plants across the country and even sent inquiry emails to Europe, but those outlets were interested in a pellet or a certain type of material that is not produced in the Central Valley.

"I think (incorporating chips or grindings into the orchard) is going to become the only solution," Pierucci said. "We just put chips on some of our own ground; it's alkaline ground, so we are trying that approach to see if we can develop it."

Serpa, who farms 90 acres of almonds himself, said there are concerns with incorporating wood into the soil, such as disease issues that could occur if the wood is not processed properly.

"That wood is going to be close to the top of the soil for a long time and once the new crop starts to produce, you are going to start picking up wood. There's a lot of problems with that," he said.

To keep biomass plants operating, Assembly Member Brian Dahle, R-Bieber, introduced Assembly Bill 590, which would use available funding in the Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund for maintaining the current level of biomass power generation in California, and for revitalizing currently idle facilities. The bill passed out of the Assembly but was held up in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

"Biomass in California reduces open-field burning, reduces wood being put into landfills, helps reduce forest fires—there's so many benefits to biomass and on top of that, we produce power," Serpa said. "The greenhouse gas reduction funds seem to be a perfect fit for biomass plants."

Barnes added that in an emergency proclamation issued in October to address tree die-off due to the drought, Gov. Brown directed the CPUC to extend biomass power contracts to keep plants operating.

(Christine Souza is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at csouza@cfbf.com.)

*This article reprinted courtesy of the California Farm Bureau Federation.*

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# Agriculture

## Trade Agreement Will Benefit California, Farm Leader Says

**Staff Reports**

With today's release of the full text of the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement, the California Farm Bureau Federation urged the state's congressional delegation to support the agreement. The TPP would reduce barriers to trade among the United States and 11 other Pacific Rim nations.

"We're glad to have the text of the agreement available, and we expect that to ease concerns people might have about the TPP," CFBF President Paul Wenger said. "Fairer, more open trade will benefit people in all the countries represented in the agreement and in California, the opportunity to sell more goods in other countries will lead to new opportunities in both rural and urban areas."

Because of California's proximity to the Pacific Rim nations participating in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, Wenger said the state is "uniquely positioned" to gain from it.

"California-grown food and farm products have a worldwide reputation for high quality, and our ports have the ability to deliver those products efficiently," he said. "Farm exports provide jobs in rural areas, of course, but also lead to jobs at warehouses, ports, trucking companies and other urban businesses that move farm goods to customers around the world."

For that reason, he said, California congressional representatives should support the TPP.

"We will be working with our representatives in Congress to describe the benefits of the agreement to their constituents, no matter what part of the state they represent," Wenger said.

The California Farm Bureau Federation works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of more than 57,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of more than 6.2 million Farm Bureau members.

## Succession

Continued from p. 6

- The exclusion is not automatic; you must file a timely "Claim for Reassessment Exclusion" form with the county assessor's office. You should consider doing this immediately, to avoid complications down the road.
- Transfers between legal entities (i.e., corporations, partnerships) that are owned by parents or children do not qualify. It is vital that your tax attorney or financial planner understands this crucial limiting factor of Proposition 58.

The popular use of Subchapter S corporations and limited liability companies, or LLCs, to protect the farm and other assets from lawsuits can trigger reassessment, because the definition of "real property" does not include any interest in a legal entity. For example, transferring your property to an LLC and then transferring at least a majority interest to your child can result in a change in ownership and reassessment of the entire property. Thus, for property tax purposes one should consider simply transferring the property directly to the child, rather than going through an entity such as an LLC.

Also, a transfer to or from a trust is treated as a transfer to or from the trustor personally, provided the trust is revocable. The use of revocable living trusts represents an effective option if you are not ready to transfer your property now, but want to make provisions for the transfer after your death.

A living trust is termed "revocable" when the trustor reserves the right to terminate the trust and retain all trust property. When real property is placed in a revocable living trust, it does not trigger a change in ownership and thus no reassessment. A revocable living trust should clearly specify that it is the trustor's desire to qualify the property for the parent-child exclusion.

As noted above, when property is left to more than one child, complications can occur when one child wants to continue farming while the other(s) want money or other assets of equal value. If a trust simply provides for equal shares in the enterprise, one child will have to buy out the others' interest. Since sibling-to-sibling transfers do not qualify for an exclusion, this change in ownership will trigger reassessment of the real property.

This scenario can be avoided with proper planning and good communication among those involved. For example, a trust can provide for a "non-pro rata" distribution of shares. This type of distribution, perhaps offset by other gifts of assets, can allow one child to inherit the farm's real property without triggering reassessment.

Avoiding reassessment of the farm or ranch in the intergenerational transfer of the property can be crucial to the long-term viability of the operation, especially considering current agricultural land values and the ever-present hammer of the federal estate tax.

Is it time to start the process of comprehensive succession planning for your farming or ranching operation? It can help provide financial security in retirement while ensuring that your family business stays in the family.

(John Gamper is director of taxation and land use for the California Farm Bureau Federation. He may be reached at jgamper@cfbf.com.)

*This article reprinted courtesy of the California Farm Bureau Federation.*

## Power

Continued from p. 6

new plantings, said Karen Norene Mills, CFBF associate counsel and director of public utilities. She said the agreement sets out the parameters for coexistence of trees and transmission lines, including how to identify appropriate species and varieties, as well as specifics about the clearances required.

"Did we work out something that is perfect? No. But it does allow everyone to move forward with some certainty about what the expectations are," Mills said.

WAPA transmission lines span hundreds of miles through most of Northern California and some parts of the Central Valley. The agreement between WAPA and CFBF relates to future plantings of trees under and around power lines. Current orchards will continue to follow guidelines that are already in place and are modeled after state and federal standards.

Joe Turkovich, a walnut and prune grower from Winters, has orchards that grow directly below WAPA transmission lines. He and fellow growers in Sutter County, who found themselves in a similar situation, contributed insight into development of the resolution.

"It was WAPA's preference to pay us to remove all of our trees from under the power lines," Turkovich said. "We declined to accept the offer because we felt that not having the opportunity to come back in the future to plant orchards was not in our best interest."

Removing the trees, he said, "would have left a huge, gaping hole in the middle of our orchards, creating an invitation for people to trespass, dump trash and so on. We would have had problems maintaining the land under those lines because it wasn't being farmed. We would have had rodents, weed-control issues, and all of the burden would have been put on us to maintain it."

The agreement allows farmers to plant new trees under the power lines with certain specifications, such as planting varieties and rootstocks that produce trees that do not grow as tall. This provision was one of the primary factors that growers were adamant to have included, he said.

Sutter County walnut grower Mat Conant, who has a block of walnuts located under power lines, was also heavily involved in the discussions. He said conflicts between trees and power lines have been going on in his area for 10 years or more, and that farmers cannot afford to lose total production from a large part of their orchards.

"From what I read, the resolution sounds doable. We always wanted to work with them," Conant said. "The only reason we came up with a workable resolution that we can all live with is that both sides were willing to compromise for the good of the whole."

Mills credited the lands team leader at WAPA, Steve Webber, with helping to establish a "constructive approach" to reaching the solutions reflected in the agreement. She noted that WAPA also recognized that transmission lines are at different heights, so a uniform height requirement for trees didn't make sense.

The resolution states, in part, that "the intent of the parties is to allow crops that can be effectively managed through informed selection of species and varieties in order to minimize trimming necessary to meet clearance requirements for lines and that will allow adequate access for the (utility personnel) to safely maintain the transmission line."

The agreement also states that landowners may plant within the easement area "species and varieties of trees with low vigor and low stature acknowledged by the University of California to reflect management consistent with best practices for minimization of height and regrowth at maturity."

In addition, a landowner may replace dead or dying trees within the easement area, as long as the replacement trees meet the low vigor/low stature specifications.

CFBF President Paul Wenger, who grows walnuts in the Modesto area—including some beneath power lines—expressed appreciation for the willingness of WAPA officials to come up with a workable resolution.

In a letter to Webber, Wenger stated that WAPA's ability to help resolve issues related to the coexistence of orchards and transmission lines will prove effective in both the short and long terms.

"We recognize the importance of safety and reliability of the transmission lines," Wenger wrote, "but also believe the continued ability to appropriately utilize ground under and around the lines will facilitate the day-to-day safety of the infrastructure, through the regular oversight of landowners in the affected areas."

Wenger said the agreement could provide a template for power providers in other parts of the state to develop similar guidelines.

"It is my hope that we can do away with all of these confrontations between farmers and utility companies, and have a set of standards that everyone follows," he said. "The utility companies have the core things that they are liable for and we certainly don't want to see ourselves or our employees be harmed by those high-voltage lines, so we put our heads together to come up with a resolution that would take care of everyone's concerns."

(Steve Adler is associate editor of Ag Alert. He may be contacted at sadler@cfbf.com.)

*This article reprinted courtesy of the California Farm Bureau Federation.*

# Boudreaux

Continued from p. 1

about the mistakes, Boudreaux filed amended statements.

But when Carter reviewed the amended statements he discovered that they were virtually identical to Boudreaux' original financial campaign statements. Carter inquired with the FPPC Enforcement Division as to how they came to their conclusion. In a conversation with Gary Winuk of the Enforcement Division, Winuk agreed that the forms had all of the same mistakes. Winuk said that the FPPC must not have even looked at the amended campaign statements before issuing their warning letter and closing the case.

After recognizing their oversight, the FPPC then referred Boudreaux' case to one of their lawyers. In an email exchange between Carter and Political Reform Consultant for the FPPC, Jeanette Turvill, she wrote, "I spoke w/the attorney on this matter today. It was agreed that since we closed this matter with a warning letter that we could not then go back to some other resolution. However, the attorney for Mike Boudreaux was contacted and they were asked to provide employer/info for any occupation that was something other than rancher, farmer, dairyman, etc. It is my understanding that it was a short list and that the amendment was filed with Tulare County very recently."

The communication between FPPC's lawyer and Boudreaux' lawyer resulted in Boudreaux filing a third set of amended statements in July, 2015. Carter reviewed these amended statements and discovered that once more they had many of the same mistakes. In addition, the corrections were a year-and-a-half late. Correctly amended statements are due within 70 days of being filed. If the corrected forms are not filed within 70 days, all donations where mistakes were made, are required to be returned to the donor.

Carter states that, "The amendment for the reporting period for January through March 2014 continues to have an excess of 70 incomplete or incorrect entries for addresses, occupations, and employers. With respect to the amendment for the reporting period of March through May 2014, again, there are over 40 incomplete, incorrect entries for addressers, occupation and employers."

Boudreaux' response to Carter's FPPC complaint is, "every effort was made to have the information as accurate as possible. We were neither misleading nor was there an attempt to conceal any contributor. There is no plausible reason to conceal anyone who donated to my campaign. Even prior to my making of these amendments, it was patently obvious who my donors were. No voter would have been misled by the information contained in my pre-corrected reports."

In response to the missing rental income--form 700--Boudreaux said it was a simple case of marking the wrong box.

Boudreaux said that his current focus is running the Tulare County Sheriff's Department to the best of his ability. "I run a professional organization," he said, "and I am doing everything I can to make our communities as safe as possible. I am briefed on homicides, gang violence, narcotic activity, and crimes against children and a variety of issues facing our county. I will continue to focus my attention on the needs of this county. I am focused on the good citizens of this county and I am proud to serve our communities."

## The Beginnings

The origins of the finance campaign complaints actually go back to 2012 when former Tulare County Sheriff Bill Wittman launched his sixth campaign for Tulare County Sheriff. Wittman ended up getting fined $466, not only for not disclosing proper addresses and employers, but because he failed to disclose $6,625 in donations. Wittman pulled out of the race in 2013 for health reasons.

Wayne Bixler is one of the several campaign links between Boudreaux and Wittman. Bixler served as treasurer on both campaigns and made many of the same mistakes. Whereas Wittman got fined, Boudreaux only received a warning for the missing information. Boudreaux did not try to conceal the identity of his donors and he was never accused of not reporting donations.

Those working on the Dave Whaley campaign for Tulare County Sheriff had anticipated a lively race between Whaley and the entrenched Sheriff Wittman. One of Whaley's main reasons for running was Wittman's refusal to deal with alleged embezzling happening at the Deputy Sheriff's Association (DSA). He confronted Wittman on the embezzling allegations which Wittman claimed were unfounded. Not long after the accusations surfaced, Wittman went on medical leave and dropped out of the race. He appointed the then Undersheriff Boudreaux as acting Tulare County Sheriff and Boudreaux stepped into the race for Tulare County Sheriff.

The embezzlement case was ultimately sent to District Attorney Tim Ward's office, which determined that "there was no evidence to support the conclusion that there was any intent to permanently deprive the DSA of the funds used in the disputed charges." Funds had definitely been diverted from the DSA for personal use but it was determined that the diversion didn't reach the level of embezzlement. Most of the funds used for personal reasons were paid back to the DSA.

Those working on Whaley's campaign said that the DSA membership was angry and that funds were definitely embezzled. It is believed that the only reason the deputies and sergeants paid the money back was because they got caught. On the other hand, Boudreaux ended up getting endorsed by the 80% of the DSA membership.

## What happens now?

Jay Wierenga, communications director for the FPPC, said that from 1,300 to 1,500 cases were settled last year with the vast majority receiving fines. He said that just last month there were 73 fines. "How cooperative the candidate, how serious the violation, and if there are previous violations, will determine if there will be a fine." Not all cases where there is missing information is a fine recommended. "If the candidate is not reporting properly they would probably receive an advisory or warning letter. The main goal of the reporting is to disclose the donor," said Wierenga.

> *"I run a professional organization and I am doing everything I can to make our communities as safe as possible. I am briefed on homicides, gang violence, narcotic activity, and crimes against children and a variety of issues facing our county. I will continue to focus my attention on the needs of this county. I am focused on the good citizens of this county and I am proud to serve our communities."*
>
> Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux

According to Boudreaux' lawyer, Brian Hildreth, who advises his clients on political and election law, "The goal and purpose is not to fill out the forms to the letter, but it is to give the voter a meaningful opportunity to know who is financially supporting the candidate. In the case of Sheriff Boudreaux, his forms were filled out in such a way that there is no doubt about who is supporting the candidate."

On examination of Boudreaux' forms the mistakes seem obiouvs. But it is also true what Hildreth says about the clear identity of all of Boudreaux' donors. The question remains why? A quick google search can find many of the missing addresses.

As far as the 700 form, or statement of Economic Interest, mistakes were also made and admitted to by Boudreaux. Boudreaux said that his one legitimate mistake on the 700 form was a case of simply "checking the wrong box." On examination of the forms, in regard to a home he rents out in Visalia, he checked the wrong box six consecutive times during the span of five years. As a result rental income was not reported.

As for his other rental properties, Boudreaux explained that he did not list them because they were no longer in his possession when his campaign started. But, the investment rental property was in his possession in 2011 and 2012. As an undersheriff he filled out form 700 once a year as a public employee, and the rental income and tenant information were missing in those years.

On a cursory analysis of Boudreaux' donors, eight employees of the sheriff's department who donated $100 or more got promoted soon after Boudreaux was sworn in on January 2, 2015. Another donor who gave a $100 was hired a few months later by Boudreaux.

Undersheriff Robin Skiles gave an unoffical estimate of 10-12 law enforcement personnel having been promoted since Boudreaux took office.

Boudreaux found the observation offensive. He said that all Tulare County Sheriff Department employees who are considered for promotion need to go through an extensive testing process and need to score in the top 90%.

"These are all high quality people and we promote based on merit and fairness," he said.

Complaints about Boudreaux' campaign went farther than the California Forms 460 and 700. In 2014, his campaign held a gun raffle as a fundraiser. Whether or not a political campaign can legally put on a raffle has never been definitively settled and is considered a gray area. But complaints by several people in the sheriff's department said that employees were selling raffle tickets during work and sheriff department employees were putting up campaign signs and other campaign errands while on duty.

Boudreaux denies that anyone in law enforcement did campaign work for him while on the clock, and if it did happen he did not support it. On hearing these complaints, Boudreaux put out a memo during his campaign, "While any political race at the local, state or national level can at times evoke emotion and passion, it is our individual and agency responsibility to refrain from political activities while at work. Should you feel there is a violation of the policies listed within the attached document please contact your immediate supervisor."

The end result was that acting Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux beat former Tulare County Sheriff Deputy Dave Whaley by a landslide, 73% to 27%. Carter was one of a handful of sheriff department employees who worked on Whaley's campaign. Carter felt at the time that Whaley had more experience and was better able to administer the department's budget. He also felt that Whaley was more reliable and would come through with his promises.

Boudreaux' plans for the future is to defend his elected position in 2018, and he has already held a couple of fundraising events. His last fundraiser, which is a yearly event, was a golf tournament in Porterville at the end of October.

"We filled 36 teams and had to turn away 20" said Tulare County Sheriff Department Captain Tom Sigley.

"My fundraisers are successful because my supporters trust me as their sheriff. I work endless hours, attend town hall meetings and numerous events throughout each week and weekends. I am thankful for the funds that have been raised by those that trust and support me," said Boudreaux.

As for who will do the reporting on the fundraiser - Boudreaux has hired Direct File, a political and accounting disclosure firm out of Fresno and will let them deal with it.

# "Dead Harvest" Premiers at the Visalia Fox Theater

**Catherine Doe**

Congressman Devin Nunes held a fundraiser/movie premier on November 12 at the Visalia Fox Theatre. The movie, "Dead Harvest," chronicled the effects of years of federal water policy, environmental lawsuits, and the four-year drought on the Central Valley. The event was free for anyone who wanted to attend.

The 35-minute documentary was created by filmmaker Ray McNally, who featured well-known Valley farmers Gus Garranza and Tulare farmer Mark Watte, as well as Congressman Nunes. The film premiered to an audience of about 700 people.

"An aggressive online campaign is underway to get the movie shown to community groups and colleges, and he plans to enter it in film festivals to give it further exposure," McNally said. "Eventually, I'd like to show it to California lawmakers and get it aired on television in Los Angeles and San Francisco."

Before the movie, Congressman Nunes lead a panel discussion of four water experts. Their discussion centered on water conditions affecting the Central Valley. Nunes pointed out, every year, because of Federal regulations, there is a 2.5 million acre-feet shortfall of water for Valley farmers. When the farmers don't get their allotment of surface water they pump ground water to irrigate their crops. The underground aquifer acts as the shock absorber during a drought or when farmers do not get their contracted water from the Central Valley Project. The overdraft, and resulting subsidence, is a result of over pumping.

Congressman Devin Nunes leads a panel discussion before the premier of Dead Harvest for the Campaign for Water Kickoff. He is joined by attorney Gary Sawyers, Victor Davis Hanson, writer/director Ray McNally and radio host Ray Appleton. The documentary shows the effects of the drought and federal water restriction on farmland in the Valley. Catherine Doe/Valley Voice

"We need to bring more water to the area or agriculture land will go out of production," said Nunes.

The movie was a result of discussions that McNally had with Nunes. He felt obligated to tell the Valley's story after seeing for himself the devastation of the drought. In preparing for the movie he realized that there was a man-made drought on top of the one brought by nature. According to the documentary, nearly one million acres have already been taken out of production in the Central Valley because of lack of water.

The film points out that three laws contributed to the man-made drought. The first one is the Central Valley Project Improvement Act (CVPIA) of 1992 which gives water back to the environment. In wet years there is plenty of water to go around, but the CVPIA has resulted in significant delivery cuts to farmers in dry years because the water for the environment is taken from their allotments. The other two laws are the Endangered Species Act and the 2009 San Joaquin River Restoration Act. The goal of the river restoration act is to restore the San Joaquin River flow so that it can support Chinook salmon that lived in abundance in the river before Friant Dam was built. The water allotted to restore the river is taken from the contracted water promised to and paid for by the farmers.

According to film makers, the three laws have contributed to about 1.4 billion gallons lost to farms since 2008. Nunes said that during his first campaign for Congress in 2002 he met environmentalists who made it clear that they wanted much of the farmland in the Central Valley to be reverted back to the desert.

The panel also pointed out that Los Angeles and San Francisco are aware that there is a drought but only see it in terms of having a brown lawn and shorter showers. They have no idea the economic devastation the drought is causing the farming industry. Large urban areas will be relieved of drought conditions with a few wet seasons, but the Central Valley will not. Attorney Victor Davis Hansen pointed out that living in Los Angeles or Silicon Valley is much more artificial (with no acquifer) than growing almonds in the Central Valley, referring to the controversy over the fact it takes one gallon of water to grow one almond.

Toward the end of the movie Nunes is quoted as saying, "they say pump water if you don't get your surface supply, but now the government wants to regulate pumping. That is really a knife in the back."

# Citizen Groundwater Input Sought

In the wake of the State's historic drought, local agencies have come together to address the region's groundwater and how they'll manage the precious resource.

"We need the public's ideas and input, now the time has come to recruit citizens to serve on the GSA's Advisory Committee," says Michael Olmos, City Manager, City of Visalia.

As the GSA makes plans to manage groundwater levels, water recharge and storage facilities for water consumers, the Advisory Committee will serve the greater GSA as a tool to help shape the Groundwater Sustainability Plan for the Mid-Kaweah region.

"The State's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires that we develop a Groundwater Sustainability Plan by January 31, 2020. That may seem years away, but the time to act is now," added Olmos.

Individuals must be residents or associated with a business in the Mid-Kaweah area. Members representing the agricultural community, government agencies, environmental interests and disadvantaged communities are sought, as well as members at large.

The Advisory Committee will consist of seven to 11 members. All applications will be reviewed by the GSA Management Committee, after which time recommendations for appointment will be made to the GSA Board.

Applications are available now from the City of Tulare at 411 E Kern Ave. Tulare, CA 93274 or online at www.tulare.ca.gov, from the Tulare Irrigation District at 6826 Avenue 240, Tulare, CA 93274 or online at www.tulareid.org, and from the City of Visalia at 220 N. Santa Fe St. Visalia, CA 93292 or online at www.visalia.city.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, December 11th. For questions, contact Michelle Nicholson, City of Visalia Chief Deputy City Clerk at (559) 713-4512.

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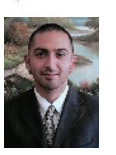
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# Bank of the Sierra Grants Enrich Local Non-Profit Work

Bank of the Sierra announced on Tuesday, grants totaling $22,500 awarded to five different Tulare and Kings County non-profit organizations. The non-profits included United Way of Tulare County, Restoration Inc., Palo Verde Union Elementary School, AMP Ministries-DBA Hands in the Community, and Kings/Tulare Homeless Alliance.

Project proposals from this quarter's grant winners include aiding the United Way's continuing drought relief efforts, supporting Restoration Inc.'s annual Thanksgiving Food Drive, which provides holiday aid to 500 families, and helping Palo Verde Elementary School build an educational garden.

Bank President and CEO Kevin McPhaill announced that all the recipients of the grant for this quarter represented organizations that are passionate for the communities they serve.

"Bank of the Sierra appreciates the tough work non-profits do throughout the valley, and it's our aim to give back to them for their contributions," he said.

### About the Sierra Grant Program

Since its inception in 2004, the Sierra Grant Program has been responsible for donating more than a million dollars to organizations that improve local communities. The grants go toward fostering community services, park preservation, and educational programs. Non-profits who wish to apply for a Sierra Grant can pick up an instructional brochure at any Bank of the Sierra branch, or visit the bank's web site at www.bankofthesierra.com/resources/sierra_grant_program.

FHCN's Cutler-Orosi Health Center will be adding pharmacy services.

# FHCN Announces Plans for New Cutler-Orosi Pharmacy

Cutler-Orosi residents will soon have expanded access to pharmacy services as Family HealthCare Network (FHCN) announces that renovation has begun at its Cutler-Orosi Health Center to include an onsite pharmacy. Already offering comprehensive medical and dental services, renovations to add the new pharmacy began November 2 at FHCN's Cutler-Orosi Health Center. With locations already in Visalia and Porterville, the new Cutler-Orosi Pharmacy will mark FHCN's third pharmacy location in Tulare County.

"Our patients in Cutler-Orosi have demonstrated a demand for these services," stated Family HealthCare Network President and CEO Kerry Hydash. "Our goal is to meet this need and expand access to care for our communities served."

The new pharmacy is expected to open in April of 2016 and will provide extended hours and a wide range of affordable prescriptions. Set to offer a discount pharmacy program, the new pharmacy will benefit patients that are on a limited income or are uninsured.

The health center will remain open during the renovation and will continue to offer services during its regular business hours, Monday through Friday, 7am - 9pm and Saturdays, from 7am - 5pm. FHCN's Cutler-Orosi Health Center is located at 12586 Avenue 408. To schedule an appointment with Family HealthCare Network, please call 1-877-960-3426 (FHCN) or visit http://www.fhcn.org/

# Free Two-Day Diversity Summit to Come to Porterville

Porterville College presents a free two-day summit, "Beyond the Talk, Practicing the Walk: Building the Bridge from Barriers to Equity & Success for Under-Represented Student Groups," Dec. 10 and 11 at the Porterville Fairgrounds.

The summit is designed to maximize culturally responsible agencies and institutions by deepening the dialogue across systems and communities; building new partnerships and learning about innovative outreach strategies and learning about available resources, support services and much more. Attendees will engage in conversations about becoming more culturally sensitive in supporting student success for the following populations: African-Americans, Asian Pacific Islander, Latinos, LGBTQ and Native American. The summit will also address groups such as: ESL/Basic Skills, foster youth, low income, those with disabilities and veterans.

County and community agencies that work with special populations are invited to attend, as well as: community leaders, health and human services, K-12 educators, law enforcement officials, faith based organizations, mental health service providers, juvenile justice officials, public health officials, group home providers, city and county agencies and college faculty and staff. Speakers for the event include: Dr. Gustavo Loera, Educational and Mental Health Policy Researcher Center for Reducing Health Disparities, UC Davis, Dr. Jamillah Moore, Vice Chancellor for Educational Services and Planning for San Mateo County Community College District and Dee Hankins, of Inspiring CHANGE and Igniting HOPE.

Registration should be completed at www.portervillecollege.edu. All attendees must be preregistered. Please indicate if you need special accommodations when registering.

For more information call Elmer Aguilar at (559) 791-2273 or email elmer.aguilar@portervillecollege.edu

# Sierra Bancorp Declares Quarterly Cash Dividend

Sierra Bancorp (Nasdaq:BSRR), parent of Bank of the Sierra, today announced that its Board of Directors has declared a regular quarterly cash dividend of $0.11 per share. The dividend was approved subsequent to the Board's review of the Company's financial results for the quarter and the nine month period ended September 30, 2015, which reflect continued capital strength, consistent operating results, and a sustained favorable trend in credit quality. The dividend will be paid on November 12, 2015 to shareholders of record as of October 29, 2015. Including dividends paid by Bank of the Sierra prior to the formation of Sierra Bancorp, the Company has paid regular cash dividends to shareholders every year since 1987, comprised of annual dividends from 1987 through 1998 and quarterly dividends since then. The dividend noted in today's announcement marks the Company's 67th consecutive regular quarterly cash dividend.

Sierra Bancorp is the holding company for Bank of the Sierra (www.bankofthesierra.com), which is in its 38th year of operations and at $1.7 billion in assets is the largest independent bank headquartered in the South San Joaquin Valley. The Company has over 400 employees and conducts business through 28 full-service branches, a loan production office, an online branch, a real estate industries center, an agricultural credit center, and an SBA center.

# Water

Continued from p. 1

mandate to reduce water consumption in Visalia by 32% (Cal Water reports that overall water reduction has been 26.1% to date), a lack of data available to assist citizens in reducing their water conservation, and little effort on Cal Water's part toward groundwater replenishment or resource conservation, according to a City press release.

In addition, Cal Water is regulated by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC), which further erodes local control. Cal Water is guaranteed an almost eight percent return on any capital investment they make, are allowed to increase rates to maintain their income stream if they sell less water, and pay millions of dollars to their senior executive staff.

"Cal Water answers to shareholders. We answer to our citizens, and over the years many citizens have suggested that the City needs to take an even more aggressive approach to our water resources," said Mayor Nelsen. "The Council is an active participant in the CPUC rate process, is considering asking for legislation to be introduced that would require utility-owned investment companies to share information with local agencies, and is requesting this appraisal as another option."

Water decisions made locally are pivotal for economic vitality and the overall quality of life in Visalia.

"We are one of 21 California water districts owned by Cal Water that are operated out of San Jose," confirmed Mayor Nelsen. "There are significant local differences in our water resources, and in operating costs and practices here in Visalia that are not being appropriately recognized from the Bay Area. The rates in Visalia are significantly higher than those of other cities in the area."

But, the appraisal is not an offer to purchase. The City Council has not yet decided whether to make an offer.

Prior to determining whether to acquire the system through use of eminent domain, the Visalia City Council will open formal public discussion.

"Our system is not for sale," said Cal Water spokesperson Shannon Dean.

On November 12, via an 8-K filing with the Securities and Exchange Commission, Cal Water was notified Visalia intends to conduct an appraisal of Cal Water's water system properties.

Although the City may or may not make an offer to purchase the drinking water system after the appraisal is complete, this is typically the first step in a hostile takeover, according to Dean.

"Whether the City opts to spend taxpayer dollars on an appraisal or not, we will oppose any attempt to take the drinking water system. The people of Visalia deserve to continue receiving the quality, service, and value that we have provided since 1927, not the higher taxes and water rates that would almost certainly result from a hostile takeover," she said.

According to Dean, there are a number of reasons the public should be concerned about the City's course of action, even beyond higher taxes and higher water rates.

"We are in the middle of the worst drought in California history. Is this really the best use of the City's time and resources? In other communities throughout the state, Cal Water is working closely and cooperatively with the cities we serve to ensure a reliable water supply now and into the future. That's what should be happening here," Dean said.

Cal Water serves about 132,200 people through 42,400 service connections in Visalia.

# Briefly...

## ARTS CONSORTIUM ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

The Arts Consortium announces the release of the 2016 application for the Visalia Community Arts Grant Program. The deadline to submit an applicaiton is December 4, 2015 for projects that will take place in 2016. The Visalia Community Arts Grant Program - a program of the City in partnership with the Arts Consortium - was created to help facilitate the growth of cultural arts for Visalia arts organizations and residents. The Community Grants Program identifies two types of grants for funding: Seed Grants and Community Support Grants. Grant requests can range from $250 to $1,500 per grant year. The Visalia Community Arts Grant Program supports activities that represent and celebrate diverse traditions in music, dance, theater, literature and visual arts. Priority for both categories is given to programs that are innovative, unique, and promote community engagement. Grant applications may be requested by emailing the Arts Consortium at caroline@artsconsortium.org

## WHCC WORKS WITH SCIENCE FOUNDATION OF ARIZONA TO COMPETE FOR FEDERAL GRANTS

A partnership between West Hills College Coalinga and the Science Foundation of Arizona (SFAz) could help WHCC strengthen its science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs, career pathways and supportive services.

WHCC is one of only six community colleges in the country that has been awarded the opportunity to work with the Foundation as part of its KickStarter Program, which helps community colleges position themselves to compete for grant funding from the National Science Foundation. A team from the SFAz recently came to WHCC for a two-day campus visit and planning session to discuss the project and determine what specific grants WHCC will pursue with their help.

"It's an honor to have been chosen out of the 200 plus community colleges for this," said Anita Wright, WHCCD Director of Grants. "NSF grants are very difficult to earn and they provide great educational resource opportunities for our students and would enrich our student's learning experience deeply."

As part of the Kickstarter program, the Science Foundation will work closely with WHCC over the next three years to enhance the school's capability to offer STEM programs, build industry partnerships in the area, and ultimately to position themselves to compete for NSF grants. By 2018, WHCC will have produced at least two competitive grant proposals.

There are already plans for how to implement any NSF funding received, including increasing student services related to STEM on campus focused on tutoring, student research and faculty mentorship, creating pathways for high school and middle school students interested in STEM and funding scholarships.

Initially, the focus would be on expanding agriculture technology and agriculture science programs offered through the Farm of the Future as well as outreach programs such as the Wonderful Education Agriculture Career Camp which WHCC offers to middle school students.

The ultimate goal of the partnership is to enable WHCC to better serve students interested in a career in the STEM fields and expand access.

"Local employers, business leaders across America regularly voice concern about the under-supply of qualified STEM workers," said Dr. Carole Goldsmith, WHCC President. "The KickStarter project is huge for us because we understand that our employers and parents want our youth to have the same access to the same kinds of facilities, quality teaching, the same science curriculum that other students have in more affluent areas. Our students can perform well in STEM programs if afforded the opportunity."

## WHCC'S DR. TIM ELLSWORTH WINS IRRIGATION E3 LEADER AWARD

West Hills College Coalinga agricultural technology instructor Dr. Tim Ellsworth was recently named a 2015 Irrigation Foundation E3 program leader, one of only two instructors nation-wide to receive the honor.

Chosen faculty had the opportunity to participate in education classes, industry sessions and networking events at the Irrigation Show & Education conference from Nov. 9 to Nov. 13 in Long Beach. The E3 program's goal is to provide students and educators with exposure, experience and education that revolves around the irrigation industry.

"I am looking forward to this opportunity," Ellsworth said. "I will gain experience, education and training that will enable me to better teach Irrigation Science and thus serve WHCC students."

The conference includes irrigation education resources, irrigation related training, and technical presentations.

Ellsworth, who joined the WHCC Farm of the Future staff in 2013, previously taught for 23 years at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and worked as a soil scientist with the USDA U.S. Salinity Laboratory.

## VISALIA BUILDING SAFETY WORK RESULTS IN LOWER INSURANCE RATES

The City of Visalia has received high marks in the Building Safety Division, thanks to work by City staff members in the Community Development Department.

"We're audited every five years and the Insurance Service Office (ISO) looks at how we're implementing the State building codes, how we manage workload and our overall business practices," states Chuck Clark, Building Official, City of Visalia Community Development. "Through their Building Code Effectiveness Grading Classification, we received a two in both categories we were audited on, family residential and commercial and industry properties."

The ISO's ratings can range from one to 10, with one being the best and 10 being the worst. A poor rating can result in higher homeowner's insurance rates, while a lower rate can save the community dollars. The City's rating information will be provided to insurance companies, equating to lower premiums throughout the City.

"We're adding value back to our community in protecting life and property, while providing an opportunity for City property owners to save money on their insurance premiums," added Clark. "Additionally, companies looking to move to Visalia will see our ISO rating as a cost savings measure that can benefit them."

Visalia's ISO rating is a recognized indicator of the quality of building code services, which is reflected in insurance rates. Rated at a level of three previously, City staff worked diligently on improving function across the board to raise the rating level. The City's improved ISO rating will help keep local structure insurance rates as low and ensure Visalia remains a leader in building safety.

For more information on the City of Visalia Building Safety Division, call (559) 713-4700 or visit www.visalia.city

## COS OPENS KIDS HOLIDAY BASKETBALL CAMP

College of the Sequoias is hosting our Holiday Basketball Camp again for boys and girls, ages 7 to 14. The camp will be held Friday, November 27 through Sunday, November 29. Friday and Saturday will run 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The camp is held on the COS Visalia campus in the Dr. S. Thomas Porter Field House. Camp instructors are COS coaches and players. All campers receive a complimentary ticket to the opening day of the Pepsi/Wyndham Hotel Basketball Tournament on December 18.

The cost for the camp is $75 for one camper; $100 for two campers. For more information and for applications, please contact Men's Basketball Head Coach Rusty Smith, (559) 737-6291 or rustys@cos.edu

## KAWEAH DELTA HOLDS HOLIDAY CHEER

On Wednesday, December 2nd, Kaweah Delta Health Care District will hold its annual Holiday Cheer event at the main entrance of the Kaweah Delta Medical Center. The Mt. Whitney High School Chorus and Jazz Band will be performing Christmas carols just outside the main hospital from 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. A large tree has been erected in the front lawn, and hot chocolate and cookies will be available for friends and family visiting the hospital to see loved ones.

Additionally, Santa Claus will join the festivities for photo opportunities. The public is invited to bring the kids by to sit on Santa's lap and give him their wish list.

The thought behind the events is to add a bit of joy during the holiday season to our patients, visitors and staff.

## TULARE COUNTY LIBRARY GETS IN THE INTERNATIONAL GAMES DAY!

Tulare County Library joins libraries around the world for International Games Day on Saturday, November 21, 2015. In Visalia, the games are held from 10 am until to 2 pm.

The library's upstairs meeting rooms will have games for adults and teens, while children and their families gather in the Children's area. Play some familiar and new games, including Jenga, Apples to Apples, Scrabble, Checkers, Candyland, Fairy Tale Gloom and more.

International Games Day (IGD) began in 2012 as an expansion of National Games Day, and now has grown to include events on all seven continents. Originally the day was created to set a world's record for the number of people playing the same game at the same time in libraries. IGD has since become a valuable way to increase awareness of the entertaining as well as educational games found at the library. Held the third Saturday in November, IGD is a fun filled prelude to Thanksgiving Day football, food and family festivities.

No registration needed, so bring the whole family to the Visalia Branch Library, 200 W. Oak Street, and get in the games! For more information, call 713-2707.

## WEST HILLS MAGAZINE HIGHLIGHTS INNOVATION, DEDICATED FACULTY AND STUDENT SUCCESS

The Fall 2015 issue of West Hills Magazine is now available online. The fifth issue of the magazine covers the district's dedication to innovation and the success of students, the many different types of learning opportunities offered at West Hills and the district's embracing of changes in the field of education such as open educational resources.

"This magazine features many of the innovative aspects of our outstanding district," said Dr. Frank Gornick, chancellor of WHCCD, in his welcome column in the magazine.

This 32-page issue delves into a variety of big topics, including how instructors district-wide are adapting to the digital era through the usage of free online textbooks, mobile applications and other free open educational resources and using them to help students to learn.

West Hills College Coalinga's psychiatric technician program and the large impact it has had on the region since it was created in 2001 is also examined.

An inside look into the district's new career technical academies, the first of which is focused on computer programming, is also offered as well as a look at art classes offered at our sites and the impact they have on student learning.

Essential Elements, WHCCD's premier public and private policy series, is looked at as well as the more than $300,000 in scholarships that have been awarded to students this year.

Finally, the five decade career of Edna Ivans, who recently retired from the WHCCD Board of Trustees after 48 years, is discussed along with her impact on the district.

The magazine is available online on the district's website and printed copies will be mailed to donors and friends of WHCCD. Printed copies will also be available on each campus and at the district office, local chambers of commerce, and libraries.

A link to the magazine is on the district's homepage at www.westhillscollege.com. For a direct link to the magazine, go to: http://goo.gl/irwc90. The online version includes an option to download a PDF copy of the magazine.

# Parks Advisory Committee Hears Presentation on TNR

**Catherine Doe**

At the November 10 Parks Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, a presentation was given on the Trap Neuter and Release (TNR) program to deal with the feral cats in Mooney Grove. The presentation was given by Dr. Nanette Kuswa, owner of Companion Animal Medical Center. Kuswa and the Visalia Feral Cat Coalition (VFCC) have been working for two years to educate Neil Pilegard, Tulare County Park manager, and the Tulare County Board of Supervisors (TBOS) on the effectiveness of TNR in dealing with cat colonies.

TNR traps feral cats, neuters and spays them, gives them their shots and flea treatments and then returns them to their home or the location where they were trapped. In the case of Mooney Grove, the cats are fed everyday and get an application of frontline to kill fleas every month by volunteers. Mooney Grove's colony is now stabilized. Besides trying to get an agreement with the county, an additional reason for the presentation was to prevent any further trapping and killing of Mooney Grove cats because the volunteers have become very attached to them.

It has been Supervisor Phil Cox' and Pilegard's wish that after the cats are trapped that they not be returned to the park. They also do not want volunteers coming in to feed them. Their goal is to completely rid the park of cats.

Kuswa explained that returning the fixed healthy cats prevents the vacuum effect, which is when the more cats join the colony in the absence of dominant male cats. Thus, trapping and killing makes the problem worse by increasing the number of cats and creates a large, unhealthy colony.

Mooney Grove will always have a population of feral cats because it is the perfect environment. There is a food source and shelter, mainly in the older buildings and bridges. The neighboring mobile home park was adding to the cat population in Mooney Grove, but the VFCC has been invited in to deal with their feral cats and the problem is under control.

Kuswa said that pet abandonment at the park was not a huge problem. The problem is that cats are always fertile and can start having kittens at six months of age. They can also produce litters three times a year. They only ovulate when breeding, which gives them a nearly 100% success rate. There are about 40 "hot spots" in Visalia where large colonies of feral cats live.

Although they have not had the cooperation of the supervisors or park staff, the VFCC has succeeded in stabilizing the cat population in Mooney Grove. Kuswa says it takes time, but the numbers show TNR works. In the summer of 2013, there were 87 feral cats found in the park and now the museum colony has two cats and the bridge colony has 10. Because of attrition and finding homes for some of the kittens, the colony is small, healthy, stabilized and preventing "outsiders" from coming on to their territory.

All the PAC members seemed to agree with the merits of TNR but most were not familiar with how Pilegard and the Tulare County Supervisors felt about cats in Mooney Grove. Their official policy has always been to trap the cats and send them to animal control where nearly all are euthanized.

"Trapping and killing has been around for the last 50 years, and if it worked I wouldn't be here," Kuswa said. "When you remove the dominant cat in the colony, more cats show up and the colony actually grows. Besides, trapping and killing cost about $140 per cat, TNR is free."

She added, that the Central Valley is at the tail end of the curve in adopting TNR while the rest of the country, and many parts of the world, use TNR to handle feral cat colonies. Every established animal agency supports the program. In fact the only people the *Valley Voice* has found who do not agree with the program are members of the Tulare County Supervisors and Pilegard.

The slow acceptance by Tulare County of TNR has its origins in an "incident" at the old museum during the summer of 2013.

According to several sources working at Mooney Grove, a volunteer trying to help with the park's cats heard that Amy King, Tulare county Historical Museum curator, and Pilegard trapped two mother cats and some kittens. All died except one kitten that escaped. There had been a previous agreement that King and Pilegard would honor a moratorium on trapping and killing cats until the VFCC could come up with a more humane plan. A volunteer, affiliated with VFCC but not a member, said she confronted King in the museum and threatened to call the police and file an animal cruelty report. King, in turn, reported to Pilegard that the volunteer threatened her with bodily harm. Two museum employees disputed King's version of the story and as a result were promptly fired by Pilegard.

Since the "incident" Supervisor Cox and Pilegard have said that TNR will not be allowed in Mooney Grove. But, because of the effectiveness of the program and cost savings to the county, PAC is taking TNR under consideration. The supervisors may be open to changing their minds if the PAC recommends the program.

Kuswa ended her presentation with, "Volunteers will do the job the humane way. If you want to kill the cats you are going to have to pay for it."

The PAC asked that John Hess write up a tentative agreement between the VFCC and the TCBOS. They plan on revisiting the issue at their next meeting.

## The Geese

Other issues covered during the meeting were an update on the wells and possible strategies to deal with local geese. The new Mooney Grove well should be up and functioning in three weeks. The domestic pump, which is part of the same well, will take longer because there needs to be additional testing. The well was drilled to 600 feet and the pumps are at 357 feet.

Pilegard presented his research on how to handle the geese problem at the park. Though the patrons of the park enjoy the geese and the goslings in the spring, there is a shortage of maintenance crew to clean up the goose poop that engulfs the walkway around the pond.

Pilegard said that the US Department of Fish and Wildlife prohibits the killing of geese, so the only fix is preventing their eggs from hatching in the first place. It is not a quick fix but it would break the cycle. The best way to prevent the eggs from hatching is coating them with corn oil. The oil deprives the egg of oxygen and the embryo will not grow. A problem with this option is that the nests have to be found and the Mooney Grove geese have learned how to hide them. The second option is feeding the geese OvoControl-G, which prevents the egg from being fertilized. The PAC members were concerned about the safety of the product to other wildlife and the safety of the littlest park patrons who may ingest the chemical.

## Progress Made On the Pond

Pilegard said he has been making progress on the pond as he hauled out six truckloads of millefoil, an invasive weed. He also put in a bluish lake dye that blocks the sunlight from filtering through the water and chokes the plants. This does not work when irrigating the park because they recycle the water through the pond. Thus the dye would be diluted to a point where it would not work. Pilegard said that dealing with the weeds in the pond with any biological control could take a couple of years.

## Smoking Ban

At the July 21 TCBOS meeting, the Tulare County Health Advisory Board made the recommendation to ban smoking at all county parks. The recommendation elicited the most vociferous objection from Supervisor Allen Ishida, who is a long-time smoker.

"This is a nanny move. It denies me my freedoms," he said.

Pilegard is also not in favor of the ban because he says that it would discourage people from using the park. He suggested that PAC survey the people who use the park to see if they would be in favor of a ban. Mike Chrisman, Chairman of the Park Advisory Commission, suggested that they research into what other counties do about regulating smoking.

Supervisor Pete Vander Poel, who was responsible for the formation of the Health Advisory Board, said that the new ordinance is to protect the general public. He and the rest of the board requested that the PAC review the issue.

A representative from the Health Advisory Board said during the PAC meeting that enforcement can be as simple as placing signs and just telling people who light up that the park is smoke-free. A park in Exeter has just gone smoke-free and attendance has increased. His experience has shown that "Most people understand that you cannot smoke in a public area," he said. According to a recent study, *California Tobacco Facts and Figures 2015*, Tulare County, along with several other Valley counties, has the highest rate of smoking in the state at 17%. Santa Clara County has the least with 9%.

Visalia Councilwoman Amy Shuklian was in attendance and said that she made sure that the dog park at Plaza Park was smoke free. She said that Visalia had just gone through the debate of banning smoking in public places and it was an involved process.

Smoking is already banned in the park from June through October because it's a fire hazard. It is also banned around the play grounds. The committee directed John Hess to find out what Visalia decided and to research smoking bans elsewhere.

Volunteers feed already-altered cats at Mooney Grove Park

# Viewpoint

## Wendy Jones Still Battling for "Clyde"

**Ron Pierce**

As previously reported in the Valley Voice on January 15, 2015 and February 5, 2015, Wendy and her son, Brian Jones of Tulare County remain in battle against Tulare County Animal Control. The Joneses claim Tulare County contrived an unlawful seizure of their family pet "Clyde", who was subsequently ruled "vicious" by County hearing officers and set for euthanization.

Complicating the matter, before that happened, the County claims that sometime during the evening of January 4, 2015, someone took Clyde by first cutting the fence into an adjacent building area, then cutting specifically into Clyde's cage at the Tulare County Animal Control facility. The Joneses claim Tulare County authorities immediately accused them of committing the act, and that authorities who questioned them were verbally and physically abusive.

Ms. Jones claims that her attempts to lodge complaints against several officers involved in the matter has been blocked by what she refers to as a "good ol' boys club" within the Tulare County law Sheriff's Department and connected government.

Meanwhile, Ms. Jones still seeks to vindicate Clyde while decrying what she asserts has been an autocratic process on the part of Tulare County in taking Clyde from her family without due process.

In a new development, William Fabricius of Ducor, another Tulare County dog owner also claiming unlawfulness on the part of Tulare County Animal Control, has joined forces with Wendy Jones against what they both claim is a continuance of the infamous Carcasses-for-Cash scandal unearthed at Tulare County Animal Shelter in 2007. Fabricius claims Tulare County Animal Control unlawfully seized and murdered twenty-five of his dogs from his remote ranch in Ducor pursuant to an illegally-placed order issued by embattled Judge Valeriano Saucedo.

On November 4, 2015, Ms. Jones, with the assistance of San Francisco animal attorney Christine Garcia, confronted the County before Judge Hillman in Department 7 of Tulare County Superior Court.

With Fabricius and a growing number of outraged supporters present, Jones and Garcia squared off against Tulare County counsel Kevin Stimmel and paralegal Nicol Dennewitz, who argued the case had been fairly adjudicated, that Clyde had been deemed vicious appropriately, and that the County had broken no laws.

In an attempt to counter Garcia's arguments of county impropriety where its hearing officers are routinely paid to rule in favor of Tulare County Animal Control, attorney Stimmel argued that such remuneration was approved by the Tulare County Board of Supervisors, and appropriate pursuant to Thornbrough v. W Placer Unified Sch. Dist., 223 Cal. App. 4th 169 (2013).

Conversely, Garcia argued that a judge in any proceeding who is paid by one of the parties in the case is an obvious violation of due process Haas v. County of San Bernardino, 27 Cal. 4th 1017 (2002), and that authorities had violated local, state and federal limitations on authority meant to protect the public from government overreach.

Garcia went into detail, discussing the County's disregard of ten of eleven elements needed under established law for finding Clyde vicious, and expressed concern for the County's disdain for a process she considered customary in county animal hearings elsewhere in the State and abroad.

She described the County's unilateral seizure of Clyde and reactive financial charges against the Joneses as inapposite to fee waiver provisions, and accused the County of essentially steering vicious dog hearings against the public in its own financial interests.

The tense debate heightened at one point when Garcia referred to the singular bite to the Jones child's face as a "nip", to which Judge Hillman took umbrage. "It wasn't a nip counsel. I've seen the pictures."

Undeterred, Garcia outlined the problem into three issues; accusing Tulare County for disregarding established "provocation law", of disregarding Wendy Jones' considerable certification in animal control policies and procedures, and transgressing clear principles of fairness and integrity in county hearings.

While granting judicial notice of various other exhibits Jones and Garcia had admitted into evidence, Judge Bret Hillman nevertheless refused to provide judicial notice of the county contracts Garcia and Jones admitted into evidence demonstrating county animal control hearing officers have a financial interest in ruling in favor of Tulare County.

Counsel Stimmel argued the County's ad hoc unilateral selection and payment of hearing officers was approved by the Board of Supervisors and that Garcia's other points of argument were irrelevant where Garcia and Jones had not met their burden of showing that the County's seizure and subsequent hearing process was deficient.

Perfidiously, Judge Hillman himself argued the Joneses' petition for relief was moot where the County had already lost Clyde. "I don't see how I can do anything in this matter. The dog is gone already. I can't give him back to you."

Counsel for Jones argued against the court's evasive stance stating, "We're here to vindicate Clyde and argue the County did not follow the law in taking him." Judge Hillman summarily announced he would take the matter up for review and render his decision in the near future.

Wholly uninspired by the proceedings, Jones stated, "All of this was argued already in briefs and he still rendered a tentative ruling basically ignoring everything we had to say. I doubt he is going to change his mind regardless of the facts and evidence."

After the hearing, Jones and Garcia filed a post-hearing declaration, with exhibits, evidencing the Board of Supervisors never approved payment to Tulare County Animal Control hearing officers; revealing what appears to be a county patronage scheme happening

## Bombs Will Not Heal Our Broken Hearts

**Rivera Sun**

In the past 36 hours, I have watched and listened to hundreds of reactions of ordinary people to the attacks in Paris. With a clenched gut, I feared the reiteration of the sequence of 9/11: anger, shock, fear, calls for vengeance, war, and more violence.

Instead, I saw the unexpected, and a tendril of hope grew inside my heart. Here is some of what I saw:

Compassion for the scared, frightened, injured, killed.

A willingness to remember that all across the world, there are people frightened, hurt, angry, and lost.

An acknowledgment of the cycle of violence begetting violence begetting more and more violence.

A stark look at our own nation (the US) and our role in terrorism, invasion, drone strikes, illegal wars, destabilizing governments, regions, peoples.

The courage to speak up for an end to this vicious, horrific cycle. To say the unthinkable: that perhaps more war, bombs, weapons, troops, guns is not going to heal the broken hearts of Paris, Baghdad, Beirut, Yemen, Syria, United States, Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Israel, and . . .

The knowledge that the list is endless. We speak the illimitable names of all the communities touched by violence, terrorism, war, destruction. We say their names as if reading out a role call of the Earth.

And She is weeping, too. Earth.

Prayers are spoken, tears are falling, people are speaking, honesty and truth telling are breaking open the fear, giving room for compassion, until . . .

We see ourselves in the faces of the world. Our sorrows, their sorrows. Our fears, their fears. Our broken dreams, and theirs. Our wrong actions, and theirs. Our silence, their silence. Our courage, their courage. Our love, their love.

Our love.

In hundreds of comments, posts, tweets, words, emails, speeches, I am seeing a glimpse of the impossible: that you, my friends, love this Earth and all her inhabitants.

That you see this violence is killing us . . . each and every one of us. We cannot bomb our way to peace. We cannot shoot our way to safety. We cannot drone strike our sense of security back. That 'terrorist' is a label that could fall on the faces of us all. That our nation, like their nation, has picked up bombs and blown apart the fabric of human lives.

The words of our mothers come back to us, "two wrongs do not make a right."

And no amount of bombs will fix our broken hearts.

Instead, we must do the impossible, the only thing that can get us out of darkness. We must break the cycle of violence. We must return hatred with understanding. We must search our souls for the truth about why and how these things occur. And then, we must work for change.

No one said it would be easy.

In the weeks to come, the usual voices on their large podiums and loudspeakers, their television networks, and radio chains, and conglomerate newspapers will start shouting about retribution and driving out terrorism, invasions, increased troops, more fighter jets, drones strikes, bombs. They will convince our friends and neighbors that we are the dreamers. They will tell us we are unpatriotic, that we want the terrorists to succeed.

Unless we take a different course. A difficult course. The path we might have taken 13 years ago, of seeing our face in those that we fear. In seeing the mirror of our common humanity. In seeking understanding instead of annihilation. In changing the course of history toward a world beyond the threat of violence. I am courageous enough to think this might be possible . . . and audacious enough to speak out, act up, and work with my fellow human beings to make this vision so.

*Author/Activist Rivera Sun, syndicated by PeaceVoice, is the author of The Dandelion Insurrection and other books, and the co-founder of the Love-In-Action Network.*

# Comments & Letters

## "Voters Get Opportunity to Set California Priorities Straight - Water In, Train Out"

**Citizens for CA HSR Accountability**

The voters of California now have an opportunity to determine where the priorities of California need to be in the near future. Board of Equalization Vice Chair, George Runner and Senator Bob Huff have submitted a voter initiative to the Attorney General that could be placed on the 2016 Election.

This initiative will give voters a choice to take unused bonding capacity from the California High Speed Rail Project (HSR Project) authorized under Proposition 1A and put it towards water infrastructure projects that are vitally need to meet the current water needs of the State and to prevent social and economic impacts when the next drought strikes California.

This initiative comes at a critical point in the HSR Project as the California High Speed Rail Authority (Authority) has made very little progress on the project and numerous questions of legitimacy surround the Authority and the HSR Project. To fund water projects in California, the initiative seeks to redirect unused HSR funds from the project that were authorized by the voters in 2008 under Proposition 1A. The Authority has spent eight years trying to develop a project that meets Proposition 1A's requirements, and both the courts and the public have highlighted numerous shortcomings that have kept the Authority and the State from issuing Proposition 1A bonds.

More recently, the Authority came under fire for withholding key documents that showed that the 2014 Business Plan that was presented to the California Legislature was based on artificially low values, and the project will likely exceed the budget set forth in 2014.

The Authority also received proposals from 36 international companies that specialize in high-speed rail projects, most of which told the Authority that private funding was not coming to the rescue and that the approach planned by the HSR Authority is not technically or financially feasible.

The Democratic Party-controlled California Legislature, charged with the responsibility to oversee the HSR Project, has refused to appropriately address concerns and has opted instead to loosen oversight of the project.

Recently, Assembly Speaker Tony Atkins responded to a request to investigate the Authority for withholding documents by brushing off the severity of the incident and emphasizing "broader range of oversight in 2016."

Earlier in the year the legislature passed Assembly Bill 95, which eliminated the requirement for the Authority to produce and submit key progress reports and reduced the frequency that the Authority produced and submitted project and financial reports.

A large majority of voters of California are tired of watching communities, farms and businesses struggle with the lack of water while a rogue agency like the California High Speed Rail Authority and the Legislature mismanages their multi-billion dollar project.

We hope that in 2016 voters will send a message to the Governor and the California Legislature that we can and will set water as our priority in the State of California and hold our public agencies accountable for the use of our limited tax dollars.

## Chairman Nunes Comments on Paris Terror Attacks

The horrific massacres in Paris confirm an array of warnings from our Intelligence Community that the West is at an extremely high terror threat level.

These threats will not diminish once the Paris attacks end.

While we don't have all the details on the attackers, it's clear we must support our French allies and remain vigilant—for years to come—against barbaric terrorists who are waging war against civilization.

Devin Nunes

## Meat and Cigarettes

Dear Editor,

Thank you to the World Health Organization for having the courage to speak truth to power: meat, like cigarettes and asbestos, does cause cancer! No U.S. health agency would ever say this for fear of losing Congressional funding.

The World Cancer Research Fund and a number of other international health agencies have been advising for years that meat consumption raises the risk of colon and other forms of cancer, but the WHO panel was actually able to determine a causal effect.

The 630-page report was drafted by a panel of 22 experts from ten countries who reviewed 800 studies of the link between meat and cancer. These included animal experiments, studies of human diet and health, and research into cellular processes that cause cancer.

The panel's conclusions evoked strong responses, with obvious resistance from the meat industry and calls for warning labels, akin to those mandated for cigarettes, from environmental groups.

Cancer of the colon is expected to kill nearly 50,000 Americans this year, mostly through a self-inflicted diet. Fortunately, annual per capita U.S. meat consumption has dropped by 15% from a high of 121 pounds in 2002, as consumers switch to healthier, more convenient, and tastier plant-based alternatives.

Sincerely,

Larry Johnson

"I don't see how any rational person could disagree with your commentary unless they are feeling a bit on the defensive side as most bullies do when they are personally being called a bully. Policemen are no different from other citizens in their communities except that they wear a badge and carry a gun while they are carrying out their duties to "serve and protect" yet no one can ever question their actions, motives, or professionalism without being subjected to venomous verbal attacks. Do they put themselves in harms way from time to time? Yes they do as that goes with the job but it doesn't give them a free pass to misbehave while on duty or off duty. No one wants the police dept. to be anything but our protectors, our guardian angels out their looking out for our best interests and welfare, someone who we can trust, count on, and feel good about. No one wants to have questions about their trustworthiness and honor when carrying out the duties that they have sworn to up hold. It is okay to ask questions and receive answers. Trust is a two-way street and citizens have to be able to trust their police dept. and to feel personally safe when interacting with them."

— ***Barbara** on **Shame!***

**Send us your Letters to the Editor**

3350 S. Fairway Street, Visalia, CA 93277 **By email:** editor@ourvalleyvoice.com

**Veteran's Corner**

## VA Emergency Care

**Joe Wright**

In 2001, the US Congress provided the Veteran's Administration with authorization (called the Mill Bill) to pay for emergency care in non-VA facilities for veterans enrolled in the VA health care system. The benefit will pay for emergency care rendered for non-service-connected conditions for enrolled veterans who have no other source of payment for the care.

However, the VA will only pay to the point of medical stability. There are very strict guidelines concerning these types of claims. Veterans and their non-VA providers should be aware that these claims must be filed with the VA within 90 days from the last day of the emergent care. This benefit is a safety net for enrolled veterans who have no other means of paying a private facility emergency bill. If another health insurance provider pays all or part of a bill, VA cannot provide any reimbursement. Veterans who retired from the US military are covered by Tricare/CHAMPUS insurance and cannot file a Mill Bill claim.

To qualify, you must be provided care in a hospital emergency department or similar facility providing emergency care. You must be enrolled in the VA Health Care System and must have been provided care by a VA health care provider within the last 24 months. You must be financially liable to the provider of the emergency treatment for that treatment, and have no other form of health care insurance including Medicare, Medicaid, or a state program. You cannot have any other contractual or legal recourse against a third party (such as a workman's comp claim or a motor vehicle accident) that will pay all or part of the bill.

The care must have been rendered in a medical emergency of such nature that a prudent layperson would have reasonably expected that delay in seeking immediate medical attention would have been hazardous to life or health. If you are an eligible veteran, and a VA facility is not feasibly available when you believe your health or life is in immediate danger, report directly to the closest emergency room (ER). If your condition is stabilized by the ER but additional medical care is needed, proceed to the nearest VA Medical Center (VAMC). If hospitalization is required for your service or non-service connected condition, you, your representative or the treating facility should contact the nearest VAMC's Transfer Center within 24 hours to arrange a transfer to VA care. Veterans have a responsibility to ensure that the VA Transfer Center is notified immediately upon any hospital admission.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets.

*Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 582-3211, ext. 2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.*

# Air District Receives Nearly $6 Million in Federal Grant Funding

**Staff Reports**

The Valley Air District will augment its highly successful grant program with an additional nearly $6 million in U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) funding to replace old agricultural tractors and dirty residential wood burning devices.

"Grant funds such as these recognize the hard work and sacrifice being made by Valley farmers, businesses and residents to expedite emission reductions in the San Joaquin Valley," stated Seyed Sadredin, executive director and Air Pollution Control Officer of the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District. "With these funds the EPA is acknowledging the unique challenges of the Valley and providing much needed financial assistance."

The nearly $6 million in funding being announced today is from two federal grant programs; the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program and the Diesel Emission Reduction Act (DERA) Grant Program.

"With this financial assistance, EPA and San Joaquin Valley farmers are working together to improve air quality and promote the use of clean, cutting-edge tractors," said Jared Blumenfeld, EPA's regional administrator for the Pacific Southwest. "This funding will also help Valley residents replace their old, polluting stoves—allowing them to enjoy the warmth of a fire without filling their homes and neighborhoods with smoke."

Approximately $10 million was available nationwide under the competitive Targeted Air Shed Grant Program. The District submitted four proposals and two are being funded, which represents half of the funds available nationwide.

Some $2,483,607 of the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program funding will be spent on replacing approximately 2,484 dirty residential wood burning devices with US EPA Phase II Certified wood burning devices or gas devices under the District's incredibly popular Burn Cleaner Program. Under this grant program Valley residents will contribute an additional $5.7 million for the purchase of these types of devices and the District will be contributing an additional $2.3 million to the program for an overall investment of over $10 million. This funding will reduce an estimated 993 tons of particulate matter (PM) emissions over the project lifetime of 20 years.

An additional $2,483,607 of the Targeted Air Shed Grant Program funding will be spent on replacing approximately 187 agricultural tractors under the District's very successful Tractor Replacement Program. Under this grant program Valley farmers will contribute an additional $8.6 million for the purchase of new tractors and the District will be contributing an additional $4.7 million to the program for an overall investment of nearly $16 million. This funding will reduce an estimated 699 tons of Nitrogen Oxides (NOx) emissions and 139 tons of PM emissions over the project lifetime of 10 years.

An additional $2.1 million was available through the competitive DERA Program in US EPA's Region 9, serving Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, Pacific Islands and 148 Tribal Nations. The District was awarded $1 million, just under half of the total funding available. Leveraging this grant funding, Valley farmers will contribute an additional $3.4 million for the purchase of new ag tractors and the District will be contributing an additional $1.9 million to the program for an overall investment of over $6 million. The $1 million will fund the replacement of approximately 75 agricultural tractors and is estimated to reduce 169 tons of NOx emissions and 28 tons of PM emissions over the project lifetime of 10 years.

"Agriculture is doing and continues to do its part to achieve tremendous air quality improvements in our valley, our state and our nation, and we want to thank and recognize our partners, the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, the California Air Resources Board, United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (specifically Jared Blumenfeld Administrator for the US EPA Pacific Southwest Region) for believing in Agriculture's ability to be a part of this achievement," stated Manuel Cunha, president of Nisei Farmers League. "We would like to thank Roger Isom of California Cotton Ginners & Growers Associations and Shirley Batchman of California Citrus Mutual and the many other Agricultural Associations and Organizations for developing two groundbreaking voluntary programs the Agricultural Tractor Replacement Program and the upcoming Tractor Trade Up Program."

To date the District's Tractor Replacement Program has provided more than $80 million to fund more than 2,200 Valley-based agricultural tractors. During just the past 2014-15 winter season, under the new program guidelines, the District's Burn Cleaner Program allocated just under $7 million to replace over 3,947 high-polluting residential wood burning devices.

A complete listing of program requirements for both the Tractor Replacement Program and the Burn Cleaner Program can be found at www.valleyair.org/grants or by calling program staff at (559) 230-5800.

VALLEY VOICE
Valley Holidays

# Travel the World of Lights at Tulare County Fairgrounds

**Nancy Vigran**

This is big – this is really big! A new way to celebrate the Holidays in the South Valley's own backyard.

With the uncertainty and tragedies of the world right now, there is a way to visit areas around the globe, locally, in a World of Lights, at the Tulare County Fairgrounds. Visitors can see renditions of several of the world's wonderful landmarks in the safety of their own backyard.

The Global Winter Wonderland in coordination with the Fairgrounds is providing acres of entertainment and fun from Saturday, November 21 – Sunday, January 3.

A World of Lights first opened in Vallejo, a few years ago, and ventured to Cal Expo in Sacramento, now making its way to Tulare. At Cal Expo the show has been such a hit, it will host GWW's new show, Magic of the Seasons, this year, allowing World of Lights to travel here.

"There are over 40 landmarks from seven countries," said Marlyn Avina, GWW marketing assistant. "Lulu Wang (GWW CEO) wanted to share glimpses of her native culture in China, and wanted to bridge cultural gaps."

The silk sculpture landmarks include the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, the Taj Mahal, windmills of Holland and the White House. Other sculptures include candy canes, dinosaurs, trains and Santa's Village.

**The windmills and tulips of Holland at night.** Courtesy/Global Winter Wonderland

It takes more than 40 artisans several weeks to design and set up the Fairground display, Avina said. Every flower bud, every leaf and every detail takes a lot of work and time, and it is all handcrafted on site.

The enormity of the sculptures can only be appreciated in person with some standing several stories high. They are vibrant during daylight hours and luminous at night.

"You can travel the world in one night," she said, but visitors may want to come back again and again to embrace all the event has to offer.

It is educational as well as fun. GWW invites school and library groups to participate as well, although group reservations should be made early.

GWW wants to embrace the diversity of the community, Avina said. Not only are there landmarks from all continents, there will also be a diversity of food vendors, as well as entertainment and games.

Circus of Light performers will take the stage at 6 and 8pm every night. Entertainment is part of the entry ticket price. This unique circus features performers from around the globe including acrobats, jugglers, fire dancers and contortionists.

There will also be carnival rides for the whole family including a carousel and Ferris wheel.

"It's about making memories for families," said local liaison Geena Saenz. "It's about getting the kids out from their computers and excited. And it's not just the children, it's a giant wonderland for everyone.

"There's no rush," she added, "you can take a walk, have something to eat, take as many photos as you want, and walk some more."

**WONDERLAND** continued on **VIII »**

**The windmills and tulips of Holland by day.** Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

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**Dazzle guests this holiday season with delicious dishes that only taste like you spent hours in the kitchen.** These recipes, created in partnership with lifestyle and cooking expert Sandra Lee, show how using high-quality, like scratch ingredients such as Bob Evans' refrigerated side dishes lets you create perfectly prepared holiday recipes in minutes.

Find more recipes ideal for sharing and gifting this holiday season through Farm Fresh Ideas, an online club featuring recipes and tips, at www.bobevans.com/recipes.

**Sweet Potato Cookies**

**Prep time: 28-33 minutes**

**Cook time: 10-12 minutes**

**Makes: 36 cookies**

- 3/4 cup vegetable shortening
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 cup Bob Evans Mashed Sweet Potatoes
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 3 cups powdered sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon maple extract
- Chopped honey roasted pecans, optional
- Mini marshmallows, optional

Heat oven to 350 F.

In large bowl using hand mixer or paddle attachment, cream together shortening and brown sugar. Add egg and sweet potato and mix until combined.

In small bowl combine flour, baking soda, salt and pumpkin pie spice. With mixer on low speed, slowly add flour mixture until well mixed. Use a small cookie scoop and drop rounds onto greased baking sheets.

Bake 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Cool completely before frosting.

In separate bowl, beat together butter, powdered sugar and maple extract until frosting is light and fluffy. Frost each cooled cookie with maple butter cream frosting. Sprinkle with pecans and mini marshmallows, if using. Carefully toast marshmallows with a culinary torch, avoiding melting frosting, if desired.

**Loaded Mashed Potato Dinner Rolls**

**Prep time: 15 minutes**

**Cook time: 25 minutes**

**Makes: 24 rolls**

- 1 package Bob Evans Original Mashed Potatoes, divided
- 1 cup Bob Evans Thick Sliced Hardwood Smoked Bacon
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded
- 2 green onions, small diced
- Salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1 package dinner roll dough (24 rolls)
- 4 tablespoons butter, unsalted and melted

Heat oven to 350 F.

To make filling, in mixing bowl combine mashed potatoes, bacon, cheese, onion, salt and pepper. Stir until combined.

Flatten dough into round using palm of hand, spoon 2 tablespoons of filling in middle. Place on baking tray.

Brush surface of rolls with melted butter and cut cross pattern with sharp scissor at middle until you can see filling.

Bake rolls until golden brown, about 20-25 minutes. Remove from pan and cool at room temperature for 5 minutes. While cooling, brush tops with melted butter.

**Bacon Wrapped White Cheddar Jalapeno Poppers**

**Prep time: 30 minutes**

**Cook time: 25-35 minutes**

**Makes: 40 poppers**

- 2 packages Bob Evans Thick Sliced Bacon, slices cut in half
- 1 package Bob Evans White Cheddar Mashed Potatoes
- 1 package garlic herb cheese spread
- 20 jalapeno peppers, halved and seeded with membranes removed
- 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, ground

Heat oven to 400 F.

Bring bacon to room temperature so it is pliable and easy to work with.

In mixing bowl, combine mashed potatoes and garlic herb cheese with rubber spatula. Stir until incorporated.

Spread approximately 1 teaspoon mashed potato mixture in each jalapeno half; level off with butter knife or spatula. Be sure not to heap potato mixture or it will spill out of peppers. Wrap each jalapeno with bacon; use 3 half slices for large jalapenos or 2 halves for smaller sizes. Be sure bacon is wrapped to seal in mashed potato mixture tightly.

In small mixing bowl, combine brown sugar and cayenne pepper. Generously sprinkle bacon with brown sugar and pat gently to make it stick to bacon.

Line cookie sheet with parchment paper and place wrapped peppers on sheet. Bake until bacon reaches desired crispiness, about 25-35 minutes.

Let peppers cool slightly before serving, about 5 minutes.

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Wednesday, Dec. 2
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Visit
Santa Claus
and take a picture
with him!

Kaweah Delta
HEALTH CARE DISTRICT

# Cities Welcome Holidays with Christmas Parades

**Staff Reports**

Santa has a lot of parades to attend in the South Valley this holiday season.

Every year, many South Valley cities host their annual parade. Each has their own theme, categories, judges and set of prizes.

Last year, for example, the Exeter Christmas Parade had 42 entries. Its categories include youth, floats, marching bands, baton groups and dance groups, animals, drill teams and miscellaneous.

Some parades boast 100 entries or more including the Visalia Candy Cane Lane Parade, which is televised on ABC-30.

While many parade entries are already closed, there are some that still have registration open. Please contact parade organizers for more information.

South Valley Holiday Parades -

**Friday, November 27** – "Christmas Dreams" Hanford Christmas Parade – 6pm – route down 7th Street from Green to Irwin, up to 8th Street to Douty past the Judge's Stand - contact, Hanford Chamber of Commerce, (559) 582-0483

**Monday, November 30** – "Christmas in Toyland" Visalia Candy Cane Lane Parade – 7 pm – route from West Street along Main Street to Conyer – contact, Downtown Visalians, (559) 732-7737.

A previous Porterville Christmas Parade. Courtesy/Porterville Chamber of Commerce

A previous Lemoore Christmas Parade. Courtesy/Lemoore Chamber of Commerce

**Thursday, December 3** – "Bright Lights, Christmas Delights" Porterville Children's Christmas Parade – 7 pm – route from Morton down Main Street to Olive – contact, Porterville Chamber of Commerce, (559) 784-7502.

**Friday, December 4** – "A Magical Wonderland in Lights" Exeter Christmas Parade – 6:30pm – route down Pine Street - contact Exeter Community Services, (559) 592-5262.

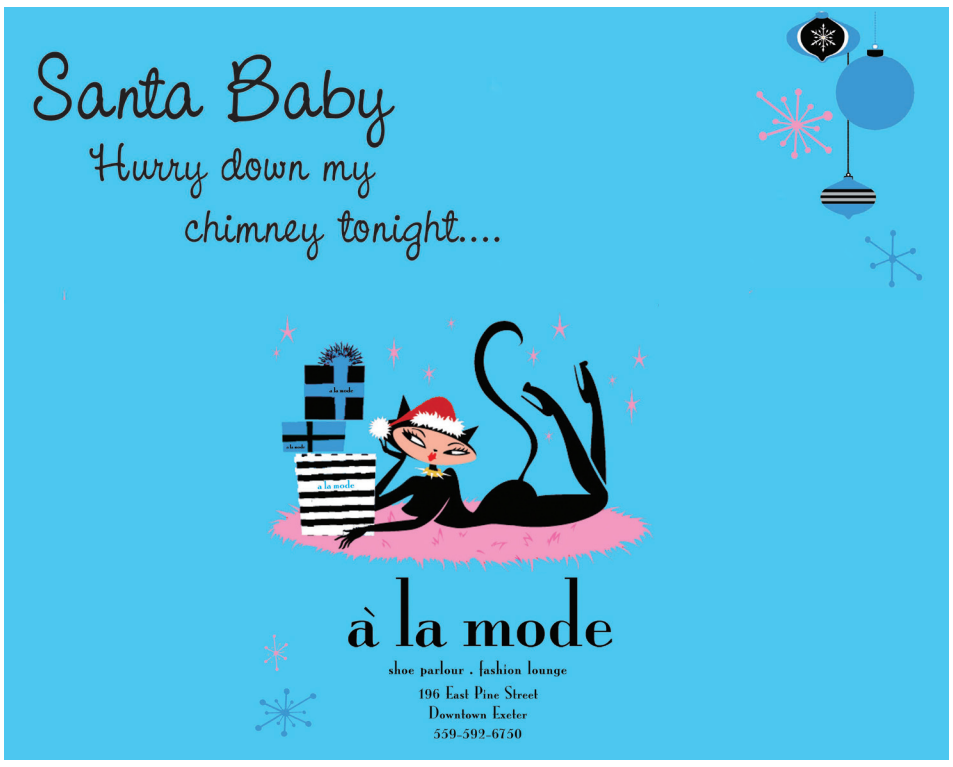
**Saturday, December 5** – "The Night Before Christmas in a Galaxy Far, Far Away" Lemoore Christmas Parade – 6pm – route along D Street between Follett and Hill – contact, Lemoore Chamber of Commerce, (559) 924-6401

**Saturday, December 5** – Dinuba Christmas Light Parade – 5:30pm – contact, Dinuba Community Services, (559) 591-5900

**Saturday, December 5** – "A Fairytale Christmas" Tulare Children's Christmas Parade – contact Tulare Downtown Association, (559) 685-2350.

**Saturday, December 12** – 2nd Annual Woodlake Christmas Parade – 7 pm – contact, The Homegrown Project (559) 804-5203, (559) 909-2932

Santa will be available at Exeter Open House Nights on Thursdays Dec. 3, 10, and 17. Courtesy/Exeter Chamber of Commerce



**Caramel Apple Slab Pie**
**Prep time: 25 minutes**
**Cook time: 40 minutes**
**Servings: 16**

- 2 packages (14.1 ounces each) refrigerated pie crusts (4 crusts), divided
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup cornstarch
- 1 tablespoon McCormick Ground Cinnamon
- 8 cups thinly sliced and peeled Honey Crisp apples (about 8 apples)
- 1 cup caramel topping, divided

Preheat oven to 400°F. Bring crusts to room temperature according to package directions.

Unroll pie crusts. Line bottom and sides of 13x9-inch glass baking dish with 2 pie crusts. Press seams of overlapping crusts in middle of baking dish together to seal.

Mix sugar, cornstarch and cinnamon in large bowl. Add apples; toss to coat well. Spoon into pie crust. Drizzle with 3/4 cup caramel topping. Top with remaining 2 crusts. Pinch edges of top and bottom crusts together to seal. Cut small slits in top crust.

Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly. Cool on wire rack. Drizzle with remaining 1/4 cup caramel topping to serve.

**Spiced Cranberry Sangria**
**Prep time: 10 minutes**
**Servings: 6**

- 1 orange
- 16 McCormick Gourmet Whole Cloves
- 1 bottle (750 milliliters) sweet white wine, such as Moscato or Riesling
- 3 cups cranberry juice
- 1 cup fresh cranberries
- 1/4 cup orange-flavored liqueur, such as Grand Marnier
- 2 McCormick Gourmet Cinnamon Sticks
- 1 tablespoon McCormick Pure Vanilla Extract

Cut orange into 8 wedges. Press 2 cloves into each wedge. Set aside.

Mix wine, cranberry juice, cranberries, liqueur, cinnamon sticks and vanilla in large pitcher until well blended. Add orange wedges.

Refrigerate 3 hours or until ready to serve. Serve in ice-filled glasses, if desired.

Tip: If transporting Spiced Cranberry Sangria to a party, prepare recipe without adding the wine.

Take the spiced cranberry juice in a clean, portable tightly covered beverage container leaving enough room for the wine. Then pour the bottle of wine into the container at the party. Serve and enjoy!

**Slow Cooker Cinnamon Sugar Glazed Carrots**
**Prep time: 5 minutes**
**Cook time: 3-4 hours**
**Servings: 8**

- 2 pounds baby carrots
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons McCormick Ground Cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon McCormick Ground Ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Spray inside of 4-quart slow cooker with no stick cooking spray. Add carrots and melted butter; toss to coat. Cover.

Cook on high 3 to 4 hours or until tender.

Meanwhile, mix brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger and salt in small bowl until well blended.

Toss cooked carrots with brown sugar mixture in slow cooker just before serving.

Tip: Keep cooked carrots in slow cooker when transporting to a party. Bring brown sugar mixture in small resealable plastic bag.

For best results, toss carrots with brown sugar mixture just before serving.

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# The Traditional Eight Nights of Hanukkah

**Staff Reports**

The eight-day Jewish celebration known as Hanukkah or Chanukah, recognizes the rededication during the second century B.C. of the Second Temple in Jerusalem.

According to legend, the Jewish people had risen up against their Greek-Syrian oppressors in the Maccabean Revolt. Hanukkah, which means "dedication" in Hebrew, begins on the 25th of Kislev on the Hebrew calendar, and this year starts on Sunday, December 6.

The menorah celebrates the eight nights of Hanukkah.

Also known as the Festival of Lights, the holiday is celebrated with the lighting of the menorah, traditional foods, games and gifts.

The story of Hanukkah does not appear in the Torah, the law on which the Jewish religion is founded, because the events that inspired the holiday occurred after the Torah was written. It is mentioned in the New Testament, however, in which Jesus attends a "Feast of Dedication."

**The Hanukkah "Miracle"**

Judah Maccabee and the other Jews who took part in the rededication of the Second Temple, witnessed what they believed to be a miracle, according to the Talmud, one of Judaism's historic texts. Even though there was only enough untainted olive oil to keep the menorah's candles burning for a single day, the flames continued for eight nights, leaving the Jews time to find a fresh supply of oil. The event inspired the Jewish sages to proclaim a yearly eight-day festival.

**Hanukkah Traditions**

The Hanukkah celebration revolves around the kindling of a nine-branched menorah, known in Hebrew as the hanukiah. On each of the holiday's eight nights (representing the eight nights in which the oil lasted), another candle is added to the menorah after sundown; the ninth candle, called the shamash ("helper"), is used to light the others. Jews typically recite blessings during this ritual and often display the menorah prominently in a window as a reminder to others of the miracle that inspired the holiday.

In another representation of the "miracle," traditional Hanukkah foods are fried in oil. Potato pancakes (known as latkes) and jam-filled donuts (sufganiyot) are particularly popular. Other Hanukkah customs include playing with the dreidel, a four-sided spinning top, and the exchange of gifts. In recent decades, particularly in North America, Hanukkah has exploded into a major commercial phenomenon, largely because it falls near or overlaps with Christmas. From a religious perspective, however, it remains a relatively minor holiday that places no restrictions on working, attending school or other activities.

**Hanukkah Celebration**

On Sunday, December 6 at 11:45am, Congregation B'Nai David Synagogue will celebrate Hanukkah with a Menorah lighting, latkes and songs and a dairy potluck.

The Synagogue is located at 1039 S. Chinowth in Visalia. For more information, call Keren, (559) 627-0844.

***Potato Latkes Recipe***

- *1-1/2 pounds russet potatoes peeled*
- *1/4 cup finely chopped shallots*
- *2 large eggs, lightly beaten*
- *2 tablespoons flour (or more) or matzo meal (during Passover)*
- *1 1/2 teaspoons salt and freshly ground black pepper*
- *Vegetable oil for frying*

*In a food processor grate the potatoes. Line a sieve with cheesecloth and transfer potatoes to the sieve. Set sieve over a bowl, twist cheesecloth into a pouch, squeezing out some moisture. Let mixture drain for 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, pour off liquid from the bowl but leave the white potato starch that settles in the bottom of the bowl.*

*To that starch add shallots, eggs, flour, 1-1/2 teaspoons of salt and freshly ground pepper. Return drained potatoes to this mixture and toss to combine.*

*Preheat oven to 200 degrees. Line a baking pan with paper towels. When you are ready to eat, in a large skillet heat 1/4 inch of oil over medium high heat until hot. Drop heaping tablespoonfuls of potato mixture and cook for 3 to 4 minutes a side; latkes should be golden and crisp on both sides. Eat right away or keep warm in oven. Serve with applesauce or sour cream or cottage cheese mixed with sour cream.*

*Recipe courtesy of The Food Network.*


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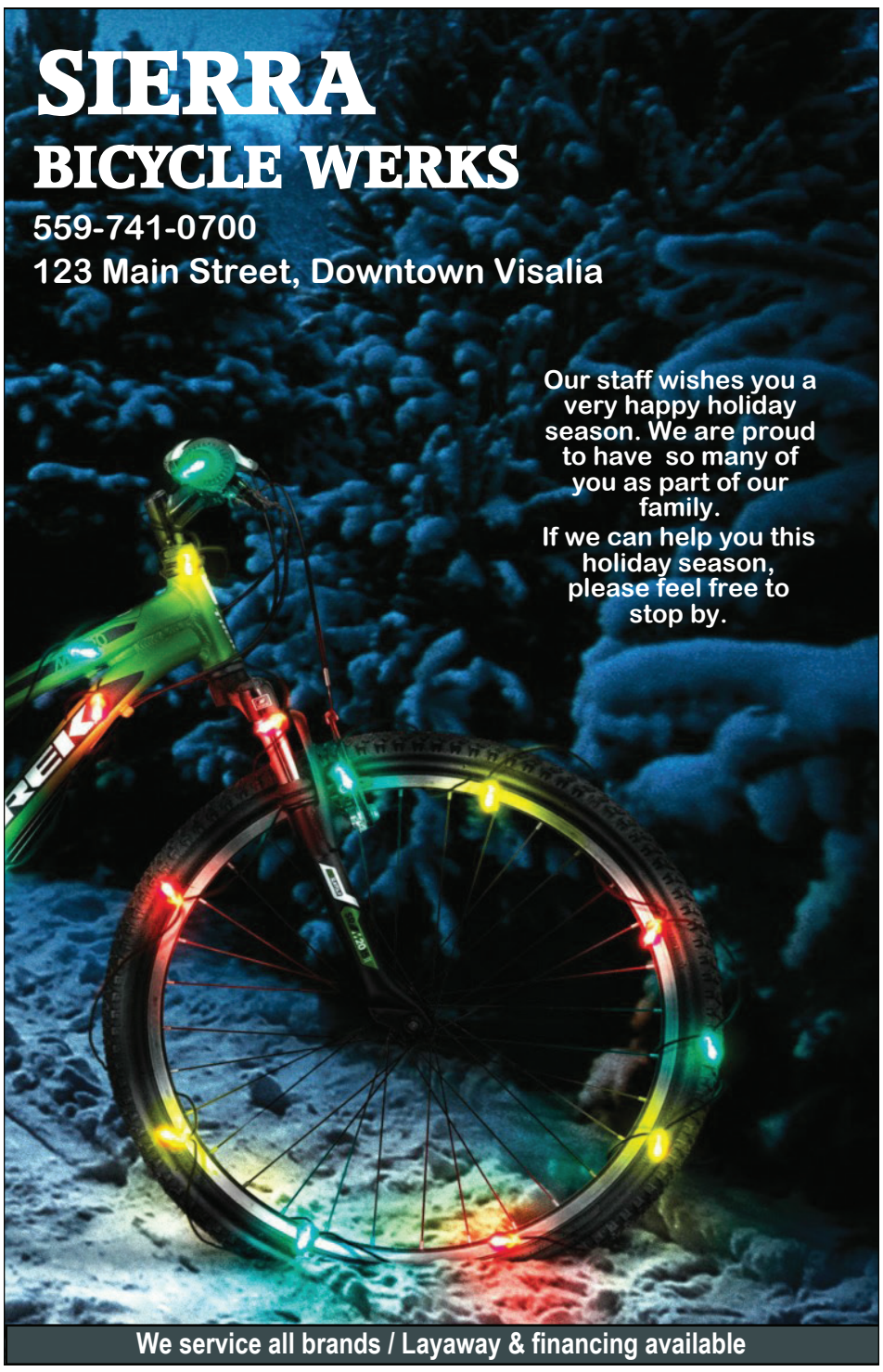

## Another Close Shave

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all
through the manse not a creature was
stirring, not even the ants.
Instructions were spread on the floor in
Chinese, in hopes that assembly would
happen with ease.

The presents were piled by the tree in a
heap, each one to be wrapped while the
kids were asleep.
And mamma on the sofa, and I on my
duff, had been at it for hours and just
called, "Enough!"

When out from the kitchen there glided
our daughter, who'd silently risen for a
glass of water.
Away to her side stiff of limb I did
trundle, and put her to bed, all safe in a
bundle.

The house like the moon in the night
now fell quiet as monks uncomplaining
while on a strict diet;
when, what to my wondering ears
should I hear, but the sound of mamma
cracking open a beer,

who burped after taking the tiniest sip,
with a come-hither look and a hand on
her hip.
With only crow's feet and some laugh-
lines to date her, we kissed by the light
of the refrigerator:

"Here's to you! Here's to me! Here's to
all of our kids!"
Then she giggled at me and winked
with both lids!
On top of the counter she sat on her
bottom, recalling the children, and how
we got 'em.

As dry as my throat was I nodded my
head, and we sped, hand-in-hand, up
the stairs to our bed,
when, from a tree came the cry of our
feline, I made to the window the speed-
iest beeline.

I tore open shutters, and threw up the
sash, to find Mr. Whiskers eschewing
his stash.
Far out on a branch he had dragged, like
some leopard, one leg of our turkey,
although it was peppered;
his fur was disheveled beyond any
measure, and he grinned at me like the
more famous Cheshire:
but the look I mistook for self-satisfac-
tion, became in the moonlight a need of
extraction.

He was caught by a forepaw in the
smallest crook, and I could tell he was
stuck with no second look.
His eyes, how they darted! How he strug-
gled and howled!
And mamma stood behind me, shook her
head, and scowled.

"That miserable cat," she said, "I just
fed him! Don't stand there staring, Mur-
phy. Damn it, go get him!"
Far into the night I leaned forward,
reaching for Mr. Whiskers, who now sat
beseeching,

when two things occurred at one time,
if you will: I fell out, while he leapt in
safe, over the sill.
Below, I was sprawled on my back on
the fescue. Now who, let me ask you,
needed a rescue?

Aghast, I regarded the twinkling night
stars, hearing only the wind and the
passing of cars,
and for a split-second I thought I was
dead; until, I remembered, the pain in
my head.

And if not for the snow that lay hither
and yon, I'd have hit the doctor's after
hitting the lawn.
In the end, of course, Mr. Whiskers was
saved; myself, so was I-- 'twas another
close shave.
— *Murphy*

# Give Your Family the Gift of Good Health

**Staff Reports**

(Family Features) As colder months approach, many families enjoy spending time together on the couch watching football, indulging in delicious family recipes and preparing for the holiday season. Many of us look forward to this time of year when we can spend quality time with loved ones, relax, reflect on the year and look forward to the new year ahead. This can also be a challenging time to stay healthy, as people tend to stay bundled up indoors and the food seems to pile up on the dinner table.

Learning how to eat well and stay active ahead of the holiday season may mean the difference between staying healthy or packing on a few extra pounds and creating habits that could lead to serious health issues down the road. That is one reason the Aetna Foundation is working to make nutritious foods and exercise programs readily available for families year-round.

"Poor nutrition poses a challenge to America's health, especially for vulnerable populations whose access to healthy food is often limited," said Garth Graham, M.D., MPH, president of the Aetna Foundation. "We're excited to support programs that help make healthy food and exercise programs more affordable and accessible to people nationwide."

There is a great need to increase access to nutritious foods in vulnerable communities and to make healthy food available, accessible and affordable for more people across the country. Millions living in underserved communities struggle to maintain healthy habits during the holiday season without the help of school-provided meals and activities. That is why the Aetna Foundation is working with nonprofit organizations across the country to provide healthy foods and exercise options and tools to more people year-round.

These tips from the Aetna Foundation are designed to help people stay active and healthy during the holiday season.

1. Eat well. When grocery shopping for large (or small) family meals, choose fresh, seasonal, nutritious foods as often as possible. When fresh is not possible, keep in mind that frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are still healthy alternatives. To guard against nutrient loss, be sure to eat frozen fruits and veggies soon after purchase and steam or microwave them rather than boiling to minimize the loss of water-soluble vitamins.
2. Cook together. As you plan and cook meals for your friends and family over the holidays, inviting your children to cook with you is a great way to teach them about nutrition and better food choices.
3. Get off the couch. It can be tempting to curl up on the couch to stay warm and dry during the cold winter months, but find ways to stay active with your family – such as interactive dancing video games, an indoor game of hide-and-seek or dancing during commercials while you watch your favorite TV show.

Find more healthy living tips for your family at aetna-foundation.org.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images


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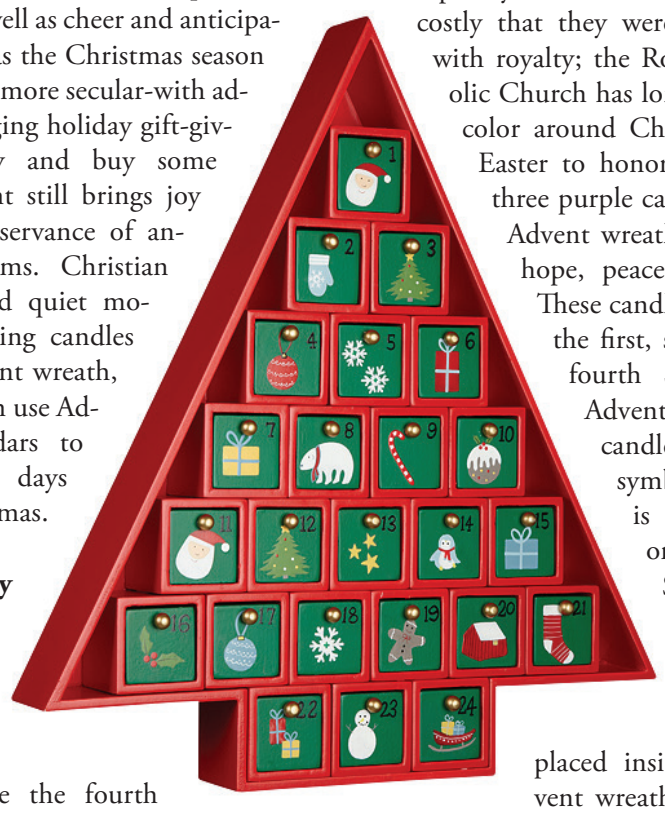
# Advent: Dates, Traditions, and History

**Staff Reports**

Advent is the period preceding the Christmas season. It begins on the Sunday nearest November 30, the feast day of St. Andrew the Apostle, and covers four Sundays. Because the day it begins changes from year to year, so does the length of each Advent season. In 2015, Advent begins on November 29.

The word advent, from Latin, means "the coming." For centuries, Advent has been a time of spiritual reflection as well as cheer and anticipation. Even as the Christmas season has become more secular-with advertisers urging holiday gift-givers to buy and buy some more-Advent still brings joy and the observance of ancient customs. Christian families find quiet moments lighting candles in the Advent wreath, and children use Advent calendars to count the days until Christmas.



**The History of Advent**

Advent has probably been observed since the fourth century. Originally, it was a time when converts to Christianity readied themselves for baptism.

During the Middle Ages, Advent became associated with preparation for the Second Coming. In early days Advent lasted from November 11, the feast of St. Martin, until Christmas Day. Advent was considered a pre-Christmas season of Lent when Christians devoted themselves to prayer and fasting. The Orthodox Eastern Church observes a similar Lenten season, from November 15 until Christmas, rather than Advent.

Many Christians still view Advent as a season to prepare for the Second Coming of Jesus. In the last fifty years, however, it has also come to be thought of as a time of anticipating the Nativity, on Christmas Day.

**Advent Wreaths**

Advent wreaths have their origins in the folk traditions of northern Europe, where in the deep of winter people lit candles on wheel-shaped bundles of evergreen. Both the evergreen and the circular shape symbolized ongoing life. The candlelight gave comfort at this darkest time of the year, as people looked forward to the longer days of spring.

Later, Eastern European Christians adopted this practice. By the sixteenth century, they were making Advent wreaths much as we know them today. An advent wreath traditionally contains four candles-three purple and one rose.

Purple dyes were one so rare and costly that they were associated with royalty; the Roman Catholic Church has long used this color around Christmas and Easter to honor Jesus. The three purple candles in the Advent wreath symbolize hope, peace, and love. These candles are lit on the first, second, and fourth Sundays of Advent. The rose candle, which symbolizes joy, is usually lit on the third Sunday.

Sometimes a fifth candle is placed inside the Advent wreath. This candle is lit on Christmas Day. It is white, the color associated with angels and the birth of Jesus.

Because Advent wreaths are an informal celebration, not all are the same. Instead of purple candles, some people use blue, which recalls the color of the night sky before daylight returns. Others use all white candles.

**Advent Calendars**

An advent calendar is a card or poster with twenty-four small doors, one to be opened each day from December 1 until Christmas Eve. Each door conceals a picture. This popular tradition arose in Germany in the late 1800s and soon spread throughout Europe and North America. Originally, the images in Advent calendars were derived from the Hebrew Bible.

Considered a fun way of counting down the days until Christmas, many Advent calendars today have no religious content.

# Santa Returns to Mall

Santa's first stop at the mall will be Black Friday from Noon-7pm. He will hold regular hours following, every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from noon-8pm and will spend the entire week prior to Christmas there during those same hours.

Every year for the past four years. Santa has listened to many children at the Sequoia Mall, and he hopes to see even more there this year.

# Did You Know?

1. The names of the Three Wise Men?
2. What year was Jesus born?
3. What's the name of the horse in Jingle Bells?
4. Three Kings' Day is known by what numerical name in Britain?
5. What traditional Christmas plant was once so revered by early Britons that it had to be cut with a golden sickle?
6. Who wrote A Christmas Carol? And when?
7. What movie premiered the song 'White Christmas'?
8. What's the name of the Grinch's dog?

8. Max
7. Holiday Inn
6. Charles Dickens in 1843.
5. Mistletoe
4. 12th Night
3. Bobtail
2. 5 or 4 BC
1. The names of the Three Wise Men?

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Penguins playing in Antarctica. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

# Wonderland

Continued from p. I

The World of Lights is open daily Saturday, November 21 – Sunday, November 29; then Friday-Sunday, December 4-6, and December 11-13; and again daily Friday, December 18-Sunday, January 3. Hours are 4:30 – 10pm Monday – Thursday, 3 – 11pm Friday and Saturday, and 3 – 10pm Sundays.

An acrobat performs in the Circus of Light. Courtesy/Global Winter Wonderland

Admission is $16 for adults, $12 or seniors (60+) and children (4-12), children under 4 are free. Unlimited ride wristbands are $25. A season pass with ride wristbands is $40 for adults and $35 for children. Parking is $5. Grand opening discount tickets may be purchased online until November 29. Tickets may also be purchased at participating Walgreens stores in Tulare, Visalia, Porterville, Hanford and Lemoore.

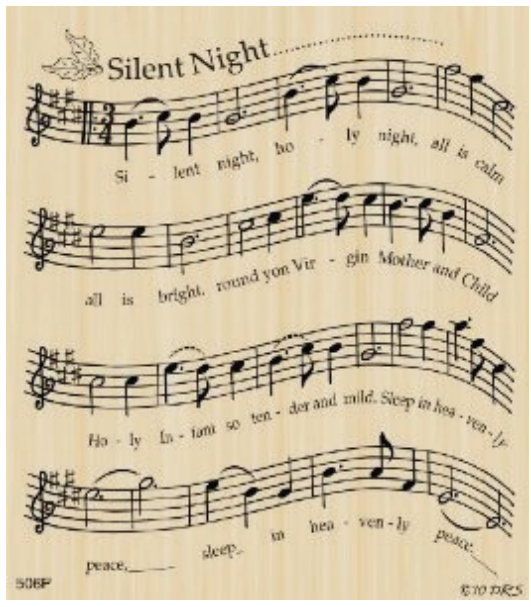
The Tulare County Fairgrounds is located at 620 South K Street in Tulare.

For more information visit, www.globalwonderland.com or call, (510) 962-8586.

# A History of Christmas Carols

**Staff Reports**

There is no definitive history behind Christmas caroling. Where many Christmas carols originated, who wrote them and how they evolved is not totally clear. Yet, caroling is a tradition, passed down from generation to generation.




Carols commemorating the nativity, or birth of Jesus Christ, are said to have first been written in Latin in the 4th and 5th centuries, but they did not become associated with Christmas until the 13th century. Saint Francis of Assisi, the Roman Catholic saint of animals and the environment, is often credited with incorporating upbeat Latin hymns into Christmas services. The energetic, joyful carols were sung in sharp contrast to the somber Christmas music of the day. The concept of Christmas carols and spreading them to the community to celebrate Christ's birth, spread across Europe and later migrated to America.

Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector of England, Scotland and Ireland, banned Christmas celebrations in England from 1649 to 1660, as it was, he believed Christmas should be a serious holiday, and celebrated accordingly. Caroling did not experience a surge in popularity until the 19th century, when the joyful, expression of hymns were well-received during the Victorian Era.

A common legend says that Christmas carols were named after Carol Poles, a little English girl who supposedly went missing in London during the holiday season in the late 19th century. It was said that people searched for her by going door-to-door, singing to declare their good intentions. While, a nice tale, there is no factual basis recorded in history.

Literally, hundreds of carols have been written though the years. Considered by some to be the most famous, "Silent Night" has varying legends behind its origin. The most famous involves Austrian priest, Joseph Mohr, who composed the song with a friend, Franz Gruber, on Christmas Eve.

"Silent Night," translated as "Stille Nacht" in German, was written in time for the church's midnight mass in the Bavarian town of Oberndorf. While the details of the story are unclear, and some believe parts of the modern day version are embellished, Mohr and Gruber are credited with adapting "Silent Night," originally a poem written by Mohr, into the legendary Christmas carol.

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VALLEY VOICE
# Valley Scene
19 November, 2015

Andrew Cantelmi (center) plays Joseph in the Theatre Company's fall production of Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat. He is surrounded by members of the production's children's chorus (clockwise from top) Jessica Peters, Josh Peters, Ashlyn West, Manjari Perry, Katie Peters, Tessa Hemphill, Shelby Wisehart, Seth Monty and Anu Perry.

## Dreamcoat Premieres at TCOE

**Staff Reports**

Andrew Cantelmi is enjoying the challenges of playing Joseph in the Theatre Company's fall production of the Andrew Lloyd Webber classic musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. Andrew, a freshman at Redwood High School, has appreciated the support of Theatre Company veterans Jack O'Leary, who plays Pharaoh, and Carly Caviglia, who plays the narrator.

At the same time, Andrew admits that the production has been a growing experience as he has to play an older adult who wrestles with the wrongs done to him by his brothers. *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* is based on the biblical story from the Book of Genesis about Joseph, who was sold into slavery by his brothers. Joseph arrives in Egypt, where he eventually rises to become head of the household for a prominent Egyptian captain.

"Choreographer Nicole Zweifel and I have wanted to bring this show to our Theatre Company for years!" said Charlotte Garcia Da Rosa, Theatre Company vocal director and the show's director. "*Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* is an all-singing, all-dancing experience that brings mature performers and children together. It's a show that inspires us all to dream big and never lose hope – a message that our youth need to hear in today's world. Joseph is a party on stage, and we can't wait to share it with our community!"

The Theatre Company will offer four performances November 19-21. Tickets will be on sale beginning November 2 in the offices of Educational Resource Services (Suite A) at TCOE's 7000 Doe Avenue facility.

Three evening performances begin at 7:00pm November 19, 20 and 21. A Saturday matinee performance is offered at 2:00pm November 21. Tickets are $12 per person for general admission and $20 per person for preferred seating.

For more information, call the Theatre Company at (559) 651-1482.

## PC Art Gallery Exhibit Features Faculty

**Staff Reports**

The public is invited to the Porterville College Art Gallery to see the artwork of PC faculty Dave Chamberlain, Mark Eaton, Jim Entz, Glenn Hill and Tom Howell. The exhibition is currently running through Wednesday, November 25.

The work of these five artists is in a broad range of media: photography, ceramics, sculptural paintings, drawing, sculpture, painting, and digital art—and each artist approaches their medium quite differently.

Chamberlain describes his photographs as "my eclectic view of the world through photography." Eaton discusses how his ceramic forms "deal with texture and the element of Chance." Entz describes how his work "draws a line to nature through process—topographical landscapes of paint formed through an accretionary process of layering color."

"As a painter, oils are my medium, and I wield them in the service of storytelling," said Hill.

Howell doesn't say much about his work, but his friend Jim Heitzberg, says in reference to Howell, "He has developed a considerable talent into mastery across several disciplines."

This eclectic mix of artists in the exhibition were educated at a variety of colleges, from Brooks, to Art Center College of Design, to Otis Art Institute, to Fresno State, and have a broad range

**EXHIBIT** continued on **18 »**

## Kings Art Center Winter Show

**Staff Reports**

This annual exhibit presents new works by members of the Kings County Art League while featuring the work of a selected member. The exhibit includes a broad range of media including drawing, painting, photography, sculpture, glass, ceramics, and fiber arts.

Ernie Weerasinghe's early training in art was at the Colombo Atellier of Mudliyar Amarasekera RA, in Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He later studied at the College of the Sequoias, Fresno City College and in the Nelson Shanks Studio Incamminati, Philadelphia.

Weerasinghe was greatly influenced by the work of the California Impressionists including Edgar Payne and William Wendt, and by the Post Impressionism of Vincent Van Gogh and Paul Gauguin, as well as the Russian artists Sergei Bongart, and Nicolai Fechin. Like the Impressionists, his landscapes are done in the plein air, while his figurative work is produced in a studio setting. His work is shown at the Door Gallery, Fresno, and the Galante Gallery, Visalia, and in regional exhibitions.

Weerasinghe's work can be viewed in the center part of the Marcellus Gallery.

Artwork by Carol Tikijian will be on display.

Carol Tikijian, a Fresno-based artist, has been a local, regional and international exhibiting artist since the 1970's, and earned BA and MA degrees from CSU Fresno. She is influenced by the work of Duchamp, Rauschenberg, Wiley and Magritte, among others.

Tikijian works in three-dimensional mixed media focuses on experimentation, exploration, and refection. For her, it is an evolutionary process that explores her life experiences within our culture. Nothing escapes consideration and, in some form, all can be found within these works. As a result, these very personal creations give us insights into our own life experiences.

Like reading a good book, her work deserves our time and attention as the message is often hidden under the beauty of the surface. These works incorporate a variety of materials including found objects and memorabilia, wood, metal, glass, acrylic paint, watercolor, soft sculpture and text.

Opening reception for both exhibits is Saturday, November 28 from 5:30-7:30pm. The exhibition dates run Sunday, November 29-Sunday, January 3. Gallery hours are Wednesday-Friday from 11am-4pm and Saturday-Sunday from 12-3pm. Admission is free and tours are available by appointment.

The gallery will open its 2016 exhibition calendar on Friday, January 29, with paintings by Stanford artist, Sukey Bryan. This exhibit, titled "Glacial Visions," focuses on the Alaskan Glaciers.

The Kings Art Center is located at 605 N. Douty St. in Hanford. For more information, call (559) 584-1065.

## Redwood High Marching Band Entertains 11th Annual Holiday Home Tour

**Staff Reports**

The 11th Annual Holiday Home Tour, featuring decorations, music, desserts and prizes, will be held on Saturday, December 5 from noon to 5pm, presented by the Redwood High School Marching Band and Color Guard.

The tour will include several prominent Visalia homes decorated for the Christmas/Hanukkah season. Each home will host a small musical ensemble group from the Redwood High School

**MARCHING BAND** continued on **18 »**

# The Road to Christmas, a Huge Family Food, Music and Lightshow

**Staff Reports**

The Road to Christmas Food and Music Festival introduced last year by THE ROAD Church of Visalia has added stunning special effects to this year's family spectacular along with an exciting host of new additions.

Presented over two days beginning Friday and Saturday, December 4th and 5th from 6pm to 8pm, at 1021 South Burke Street in Visalia this is a must see, must attend fun event for the entire family and the South Valley Community.

The Road to Christmas will have five kinds of food including fun finger foods for kids and a Christmas Cookie Village. Come enjoy Deep Pit Barbecue, Mexican Food, Grilled Chicken and Chili favorites. And, if that wasn't enough, there's a visually stimulating light show, and four styles of music with a neat collection of other holiday surprises at every turn which are guaranteed to please.

The Road to Christmas event takes place on Friday, December 4th at 6pm to 8pm on Saturday December 5th at 6 pm. The Festival will also feature a family photo area, worship, and a drum line surprise.

This event is created for the enjoyment of the entire Visalia community and provides an opportunity to experience the joy, excitement and meaning of Christmas that is literally busting with warmth, fun, and tradition. Come dressed in your Christmas clothes and hats and be blessed by "The Road"!

Adult tickets are $10 and children 2 and under are admitted free. Tickets are available at the Road Church at 1021 S. Burke Street, Visalia or can be purchased on line www.theroadvisalia.com. You can also call 559-747-6753

"This event is designed to be a truly unique and memorable family occasion," explains John Lloyd, the lead pastor of the Road Church and founder Iron Men's Ministries. "The Road church family and its staff has stepped up to impact the Visalia community in a festive Christmas setting that's sure to please."

Over the years, the community has enjoyed the quality of a Pastor John produced events, from the 4000+ Big Man's Breakfast featuring Derek Carr to the Iron Men's Retreat at Hume Lake, the common thread is the love and joy of the Lord. For more information, contact Linda at 559-747-6753 or linda@theroadvisalia.com .

On Facebook at facebook.com/ourvalleyvoice

Print replica edition at issuu.com/ourvalleyvoice

# Valley Artists' Studio Tour March 18-20

**Staff Reports**

The Arts Consortium is offering an exclusive behind-the-scenes look into the world of local artists with the South Valley Artists' Studio Tour taking place March 18-20, 2016. This event is an incredible opportunity for artists to personally connect with art lovers and collectors by inviting guests into their creative space. Artist applications are now being accepted.

Any work-space can be considered a studio, including a spare room, garage, kitchen table, etc. Since the tour has merged with the Three Rivers Artists' Studio Tour, any artists within Tulare County boundaries are encouraged to apply. In the past, the event has boasted representation from numerous communities including: Springville, Porterville, Lindsay, Exeter, Tulare, Visalia, Dinuba, Woodlake, Elderwood, and Three Rivers.

The Arts Consortium, the active non-profit arts council for all of Tulare County, is one of the state local partners of the California Arts Council. The organization also works closely with other non-profits, local governments, and businesses, to provide opportunities to create and celebrate the arts for all residents and visitors. With successful events like the Taste the Arts Festival and the First Friday Downtown Visalia art walk under their belt, the Arts Consortium is excited to continue expanding the South Valley Artists' Studio Tour, now in its third year. Last year, the 35 featured artists made over $10,000 in sales with a little over 200 attendees.

Artists may find the application on the Arts Consortium's website: artsconsortium.org/svast. Applications are due December 11, 2015. For more information, call the Arts Consortium at 559.802.3266 or email the Program Coordinator at mckenna@artsconsortium.org.

# Exhibit

Continued from p. 17

of life and employment experiences, from military veteran, professional pilot, animator, film-maker, photographer, free-lance illustrator, magazine art director to graphic designer. Yet all are passionate about their artwork and all are passionate about their role as teachers and mentors of students of art, the budding artists, designers, photographers, animators and illustrators of the future.

Gallery hours are Monday through Thursday from 12-2pm and 4-6pm. Contact the front desk when you arrive to visit the show for a free temporary parking permit.

The Porterville College Art Gallery is located on campus at 100 East College Avenue.

Artwork by Glenn Hill will be on display.

# Marching Band

Continued from p. 17

band, which will play holiday favorites. Each home will also feature holiday decorations and spreads of colorful and delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts.

The tour begins at Quail Park Retirement Village, 4520 W. Cypress Ave. (between Akers and Linwood). Ticket cost is $15 before December 5, and $20 at the door. After purchasing tickets, guests will receive a map with directions to the homes on the tour. Quail Park itself will be decorated, and several local businesses will have booths set up featuring many holiday specials.

Guests will also have the opportunity to purchase tickets for "Tricky Tray" prizes —specially decorated baskets with various gift items. They do not have to be present at the drawing to win. Once guests have experienced all that Quail Park has to offer, they may visit any or all of the homes on the tour.

Tickets may be purchased from Redwood High School Band and Color Guard members; the Redwood High School finance office; White's Music,100 E. Caldwell; Copy Pack 'N Ship, 4125 W. Noble; MidTown Sports, 117 E. Main St.; Chelsea Street Boutique, 114 E. Main St. and Miracle-Ear Hearing Center, 4006 S. Demaree St.. For more information on the Home Tour, visit www.redwoodrangerband.org. or call (559) 967 5276.

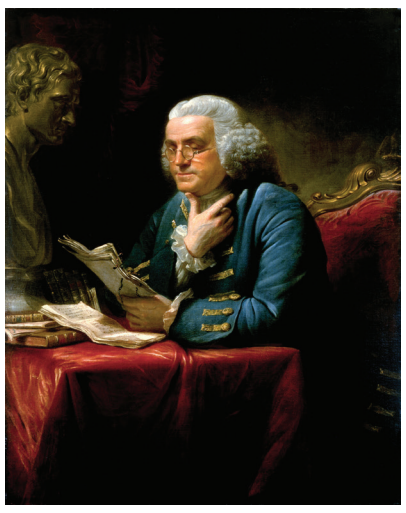
# Great Conversations

## Satire: The Case of Franklin, Bierce, and Allen

**Joseph R. Teller**

Though most Americans didn't know it, when they watched Donald Trump on a recent installment of *Saturday Night Live*, they were really participating in a literary tradition that goes back to Roman times: satire. Indeed, one need only remember that in the past 10 years *The Daily Show* and *The Colbert Report* were staples of media culture for millions of Americans to see the influence and even pervasiveness of satire.

This week, the Great Books group at COS discussed three satirical essays to gain a better understanding of what makes satire—and satirical humor more broadly—work: Benjamin Franklin's "Remarks Concerning the Savages of North America," Ambrose Bierce's "Oil of Dog," and Woody Allen's "The Whore of Mensa."



The pieces couldn't diverge more in their subjects. Franklin's piece uses a naïve narrative voice to describe Native American relations with the white colonists of the mid-eighteenth century, subtly challenging the whole notion of "the savage"; Bierce's ghastly piece describes the death of the narrator's parents and subsequent rendering of them into medicinal oil to be sold for a handsome profit to the community; and Allen's often hilarious short appropriates the tradition of film noire to describe the bust of a prostitution ring that specializes in girls who will talk literature and philosophy with men who'd prefer to be intellectually stimulated by women other than their wives.

So what do these pieces have in common? How do they illustrate basic characteristics of satire? We seemed to agree on a few basic criteria. First, satire targets the foibles and moral failings of contemporary society, especially those associated with a particular class of that society.

Franklin, for instance, takes aim at a nascent racism emerging in the eighteenth century English colonies that would within a century blossom into outright war against Native Americans. Bierce's macabre tale critiques soulless commercialism as well as the tone and conventions of popular nineteenth century moral fables; and Allen's pitch-perfect mockery of neurotic intellectual culture in 1970s New York more broadly targets a certain kind of faux intellectualism.

Second, satire tends to use both hyperbole and understatement to achieve its goals: Bierce's narrator describes the heinous crime of infanticide (his mother's profession—to "dispose of unwelcome babes") in a detached, blasé tone, while Franklin creates Native American characters who use polite and civil understatement to imply a scathing critique of European attitudes toward natives. And third, satire depends invariably on irony in multiple forms: there must be a conceptual distance between *what* is being portrayed and *how* we are meant to take it, and if the audience doesn't understand this gap between content and intention—if we don't get that it is, in fact, satire—satire inevitably fails.

This last point is provocative when we reflect on today's political culture: what happens when the audience cannot detect the demarcation between satire and seriousness? What happens when people mistake satire for "real news" (as was the case when so many young people looked to *The Daily Show* for their news)? And conversely, what happens—as is the case in a political culture where celebrity is more important than substance—when serious realities like political campaigns and democratic elections look more and more like satire?

# The Art of Shane Guffogg

The work of Shane Guffogg will display Saturday, November 21 through Sunday, January 10 at the Lindsay Museum.

Guffogg is a native of the Lindsay / Strathmore area, having attended Lindsay schools, before his family moved to Strathmore, where he attended finished elementary and high school. Guffogg graduated from Porterville College and transferred to Cal Arts, graduating with his BFA. During this time Guffogg moved to New York City for an internship with the artist Gary Stephan.

Guffogg began exhibiting his art in 1989 at the Wade gallery in Los Angeles and since then has been in more than 100 exhibitions around the world. His most recent exhibition was in St. Petersburg, Russia at the Imperial Academy of Arts Museum. This exhibition consists of 73 paintings and 3 sculptures that span 27 years of work. The exhibition is scheduled to travel to the Pushkin Museum in Moscow followed by the Palais de Tokyo Museum in Paris in the summer of 2016.

Guffogg is known for his calligraphic oil paintings that seem to literally hover between abstraction and realism, infused with light that is a result of his glazing technique that is similar to the Old Masters. Guffogg often spends three to six months on a painting, applying 80 or more thin translucent layers of paint that create the illusion of light coming from within the paintings.

This exhibition at the Lindsay Museum is unique in that Guffogg has chosen art that has rarely been seen by the public but documents his thoughts and ideas, starting with his first self-portrait, painting himself as the old Dutch Master, Rembrandt, to his most recent abstract paintings which the Los Angeles based artist describes as "Wordless poems."

The exhibition is a pictorial journey beginning with Guffogg at 18, having just returned from a summer trip to Europe and being deeply influenced from seeing some of the world's greatest paintings of the old masters, followed by his time at Porterville college where he began absorbing the ideas of 19th and 20th Century art history and questioning what Einstein's Theory of Relativity might look like, to his time at Cal Arts and the work that immediately followed. In 1988, Guffogg returned to his family's ranch in Strathmore and began painting the images that he was most familiar with fruit from their orchard. This return to his roots opened up new ideas of what art could be.

"I began wondering what thoughts look like before we attach language to them," he said. "I was also wanting to make paintings that hover between abstraction and realism – between what we see and what we sense."

The exhibition will consist of more than 30 paintings and works on paper, including Guffogg's private sketch books, that span 34 years. Guffogg's thoughts on these works will be printed and on display next to the works of art, giving viewers a chance to see and hear his thoughts of his artistic journey as an internationally acclaimed artist.

An artist's reception will be held on Saturday, November 21 from 5-8 pm. The Lindsay Museum is located at 147 N. Gale Hill Ave.

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# Calendar

**Mondays: Bridge Club, 9:30am-2pm**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. Admission is free. For additional information call: Joan Dinwiddie @ 732-0855

**Mondays: Knitters, 10am-12:30pm**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291**.** Everyone's welcome.

**Fridays: Women's Morning Bible Study, 9am-Noon**
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. For additional information call: 739-9010

**1st and 3rd Thursdays: Central Valley Tea Party Meetings, 6pm**
819 West Visalia Road, Farmersville.

**Through November 30: Express Employment's Pay It Forward Hiring Drive benefitting Visalia Rescue Mission**
Give the gift of employment by joining Express Employment Professionals' Pay It Forward Holiday Hiring Drive as they strive to place 100 job seekers in Tulare, Kings & Fresno Counties November 1st-30th. Being out of work during the holidays can be particularly tough, and we would like to make sure as many people as possible earn a paycheck just in time for the holidays. For every new hire through this Hiring Drive, Express will donate $40 to VRM! For more information, please contact: Nathan Jefferson at 559-738-7822.

**Through January 3: "Hidden in the Leaves" Arts Exhibition**
The Arts Alliance of Three Rivers is excited to present "Hidden in the Leaves" arts exhibition. Uncover autumn's abundance of artistry and imagination at our 2015-2016 Fall-Winter art show. Opening on November 3rd thru January 3rd at 41717 Sierra Drive Three Rivers. Open daily (except Monday) 10am to 5pm. Artist receptions will be held on 1st Saturday, November 7, December 5 and January 2 from 11am to 2:30pm. Sponsors include Arts Alliance of Three Rivers, Sierra Subs and Salads and 1st Saturday of Three Rivers. For additional information call 559 967-8281.

## NOVEMBER

**November 19, 20, & 21:Theatre Company Fall Musical *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat***
L. J. Williams Theatre, 1001 Main St., Visalia. For more information, contact Brian Roberts at brianr@tcoe.org or call (559) 651-1482.

**November 20: Circle J Astronomy Night, 4:30pm**
Grade 3 Family Astronomy Night, open to the public Circle J-Norris Ranch, Springville. For more information and to reserve a spot, contact Nancy Bruce at circlej@ocsnet.net or call (559) 539-2263.

**November 20 &21: Fundraiser Golf Tournament for the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias**
The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias will hold its major fundraiser of the year November 20th and 21st. The 2-day event begins with a golf tournament at the Visalia Country Club on Friday, November 20th, at 11am. Sponsorships are available, ranging from tee/green signage to the platinum sponsorship. The golf tournament is followed on November 21st with a gala at the Visalia Country Club at 6pm. For more information or sponsorship, contact Lynn Dodds at (559) 592-4074 or email lynn.dodds@bgcsequoias.org.

**November 21: Exeter Eagles Lodge Annual Turkey Shoot, 9am-5pm**
Exeter Eagles Lodge Annual Turkey Shoot will be on November 21st from 9 am to 5 pm at 555 West Visalia Rd in Exeter. There will be games, Dice, Shooting Range, Bingo and Poker with Turkeys to winners. No outside guns for Turkey Shoot. Thre will also be a gun raffle, food and bar. Event is open to the public. For more information, call (559) 592-1771.

**November 21: Tulare Kings Writers Meeting, 10am-Noon**
At Arts Visalia, 214 E. Oak Avenue in Visalia, Author Kathy Stevens will present "The Unique Relationship between Visual Thinking and Powerful Writing." Because visual imagery is more concrete than words, writers need to access it on a daily basis. In doing so, they become more ambidextrous in their thinking, using verbal, logical thought right alongside visual, spatial thought. Please bring your business cards, fliers, etc. for the networking part of the meeting.

**November 21: Redwood Boys Basketball Boosters presents Meet the 2015-16 Rangers, 5-7pm**
In the Redwood gym. Tickets $20.00. Intra-squad scrimmage/Hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks provided/Dessert/ silent auction. Come meet the current Rangers and re-connect with fellow alumni RSVP BY NOV. 18TH- cmkmgarner@yahoo.com

**November 21: Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Annual Installation of Officers and Business Awards Dinner, 6pm**
At Tachi Palace, the evening will commence with no-host cocktail hour at 6pm. Master of Ceremonies will be Marie Arroyo of Lindsay. Keynote Speaker will be Olivia Calderon. In conjunction with the evening's events the program will recognize local community leaders and businesses that have made a difference in our community. Tickets are $65 per person or $600 for a table of ten. Sponsorships opportunities are available, for additional information call 559-734-6020.

**November 22: Tulare Host Lions Club's annual Turkey Shoot, 10am-4pm**
The Tulare Host Lions Club's annual Turkey Shoot will be held on November 22on the grounds of the Agri-Center in Tulare, located South of Tulare East of highway 99. Frozen 12 to 15 pound turkeys will be on site. They can be won by target shooting at $3 a round, or taking part in the other games. All net proceeds go to vision conservation for the Tulare elementary schools, and the Blind Babies Foundation of Tulare County. For more information contact 688-2740 or 686-6483.

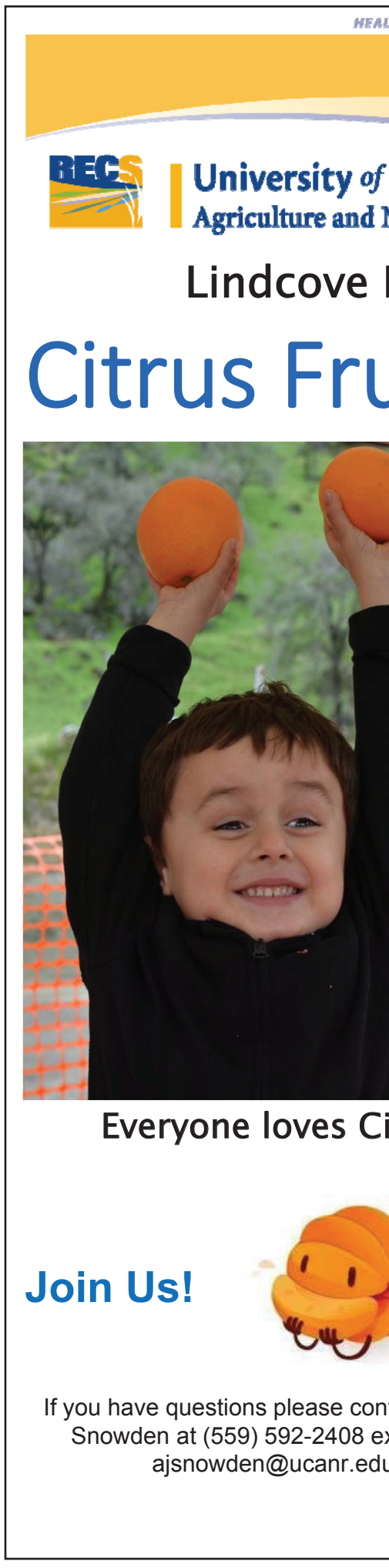
**November 23: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm**
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*

**November 24: ADA Compliance Workshop, 6:30pm**
FREE ADA Compliance Workshop on Tuesday, November 24th at 6:30pm at the Lemoore Civic Auditorium. PLEASE RSVP to ceo@lemoorechamber.org by November 20th.

**November 25: Sound N Vision Foundation pre thanksgiving R&B /Soul Party, 7:30-10pm**
Featuring Stan Carrizosa, plus Danielle Marie Stacy. At the Cellar Door, 101 West Main Street in Visalia. Tickets $10 (21+) available at Ticketweb.com. Doors 7:30/Show 8pm.

**November 27: "Christmas Dreams" Hanford Christmas Parade, 6pm**
Route down 7th Street from Green to Irwin, up to 8th Street to Douty past the Judge's Stand - contact, Hanford Chamber of Commerce. For more information call (559) 582-0483.

**November 27: The Nutcracker, 7-9pm**
New theater company, Theater Arts Alliance, brings back the magical holiday tradition of The Nutcracker to the Central Valley ? featuring a combination of local talented dancers and a few professionals. Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Ballet is one of the most famous ballet's the world has even known. Be prepared to be swept away by the beauty and wonder of this holiday, spectacular

performance. Three shows planned for Thanksgiving weekend on Friday, November 27 (7pm) and Saturday, November 28 (2pm and 7pm). Tickets are $25 and can be purchased by calling 800.838.3006 or visiting www.360arts.brownpapertickets.com. For more information about TAA productions, or ticket sales, visit www.theaterartsalliance.com.

**November 28: Exeter Sportsman Youth Pheasant Hunt, 7am**
Exeter Sportsmen's Association will be hosting the Annual Youth Pheasant Hunt, Saturday, November 28th. Open to the first 125 youth hunters accompanied by an adult. Must have Hunter Safety Certificate and a Youth Hunter's License before signing up. Location will be 18819 Rd. 276 in Strathmore. Sign up is at 7am and briefing at 7:30am. Hunt begins at 8am. For more information, contact Paul Brown for sign up info at (559) 300-4001 or email at kidswift@att.net. Contact Rick Romero for questions and other information at (559) 303-5651 or email:evromero@verizon.net.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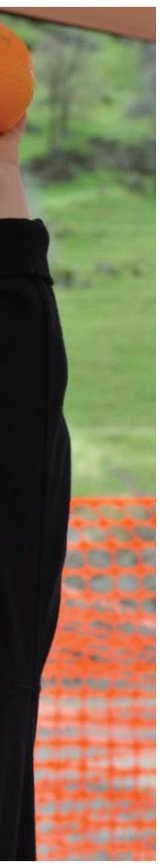

itrus!

**Date**
December 12, 2015

**Time**
9:00 AM- Noon

**Location**
Education Building at 22963 Carson Avenue, Exeter. The Education Building is located at the end of Carson Ave on the right.

Join us for this wonderful event where you can see and taste more than 100 citrus varieties that are grown at Lindcove.

Citrus enthusiasts can get answers to their questions about citrus horticulture and pest management at the Master Gardener booth as well as from UC Extension personnel.

**Directions**: From Visalia take Highway 198 east to Mehrten Drive (Approximately 15 miles) and follow the signs to our Event.

tact Ashley
xt 151 or
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**About Lindcove Research & Extension Center**

Scientists from around the State conduct research to:
- Develop and evaluate new citrus varieties
- Improve citrus production
- Protect citrus from pests and plant diseases

Results from their research are shared with growers, homeowners, teachers, and students to bring agriculture to life!

http://lrec.ucanr.edu/


**November 30: Pizza with a Purpose, 5-9pm**
Enjoy a great meal & support a great cause! Every #lastmonday of the month in 2015. The Planing Mill will donate a portion of the evening's revenue to the VRM!

**November 30: "Christmas in Toyland" Visalia Candy Cane Lane Parade, 7 pm**
Route from West Street along Main Street to Conyer – contact, Downtown Visalians, (559) 732-7737.

## DECEMBER

**December 3: "Bright Lights, Christmas Delights" Porterville Children's Christmas Parade, 7pm**
Route from Morton down Main Street to Olive – contact, Porterville Chamber of Commerce, (559) 784-7502.

**December 4: Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group Meeting, 10:30am**

In the pre school center of Visalia United Methodist Church located at 5200 West Caldwell in Visalia. Annual holiday program featuring live music. Join us for lunch and good conversation after the meeting: www.cvpsg.net or cvparkinsons@gmail.com or 559-563-0725

**December 4: Exeter's Christmas Parade, "A Christmas Vacation," 6:30pm**
The parade will be December 4th at 6:30pm in downtown Exeter. For more information, call Community Services at (559) 562-5262. Return all entry forms to Community Services at 137 N. "F" Street.

**December 5: Lemon Cove Women's Club Annual Bake Sale, Bazaar & Luncheon, 11am**
The bazaar opens at 11am, with luncheon at noon. Door prizes. At 32792 Sierra Dr. (Hwy. 198) in Lemon Cove's historic Pogue Hotel. $15 per person. Proceeds help maintain and upgrade the hotel. For reservations call 597-1416 or 597-2459.

**December 5: Exeter Kiwanis Presents the 24th Annual "Spirit of the Holidays," 4-7pm**
Exeter Kiwanis presents The 24th Annual "Spirit of the Holidays," Saturday December 5th from 4 to 7pm at the Exeter Memorial Building, 324 N. Kaweah. There will be excellent Wine Tasting, Hors d'oeuvres, raffle, silent auction and a Live Christmas Tree Auction. Tickets are $50 each. For more information, call the Exeter Chamber of Commerce at (559) 592-2919.

**December 5: Dinuba Christmas Light Parade, 5:30pm**
Contact Dinuba Community Services, (559) 591-5900.

**December 5: Lemoore Christmas Parade, 6pm**
"The Night Before Christmas in a Galaxy Far, Far Away." Downtown Lemoore, D Street.

**December 7: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm**
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Carl Jung, "The Stages of Life"

**December 9: Way Back Wednesdays--Classic Flicks at the Fox, 7pm**
On the second Wednesday monthly through April, 2016, the Visalia Fox Theatre presents a classic film. Admission is $5 and includes a small popcorn. Tonight: Gremlins, 1984.

**December 11: Exeter Woman's Club 5th Annual Christmas Home Tour, 4-8pm**
Exeter Woman's Club 5th Annual Christmas Home Tour. This year's event will be on Friday, December 11th from 4 to 8pm. Tickets are $20 each and can be purchased at the Exeter Woman's Club at 201 N. Kaweah or at the Exeter Chamber of Commerce at 101 W Pine Street. For more information, call (559) 799-3641.

**December 11: Visalia Chamber Annual Christmas Tree Auction**
The 35th Annual Christmas Tree Auction will have a Champagne Jubilee theme. The Christmas Tree Auction is the only formal event open to the public in the city. General admission includes: wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, the live large tree and silent auction, dessert & dancing. The VIP ticket includes: a sit down dinner, live large tree auction, wine tasting, hors d'oeuvres, silent auction, dessert & dancing. Tickets will be available online after September 8th at www.visaliachamber.org Don't miss the chance to generously support the work of local non-profits and kick off the holiday season with the most festive party in town. Sponsorship opportunities for the Christmas Tree Auction are available for interested businesses, call the Chamber at 559-734-5876 for details.

# Sports

# Starting a New Tradition in PC Women's Basketball

**Stefan Barros**

The Porterville College women's basketball team has just begun its 2015-16 campaign, and head coach Jeremy Parker, who takes over as permanent coach after being an interim last season, is really happy with this particular group of players that he's coaching. Parker came over from coaching the Porterville men's team mid-season last year.

Parker talked about the challenges transitioning mid-season, and some differences between coaching men and women. "I find that the women are a little easier to coach," he said. "They are a more accepting to it. They won't go away from the game plan.

"And then coming in midway through last season it was tough. I didn't really know my players well. I knew their faces, but I didn't know them as people."

Parker's team is young, even by Junior College standards.

"We have all freshmen," he said. "We do have Dee Jackson who's redshirting this year. She played last year, but got hurt and won't play this year."

One reason Parker likes his group, he said, is because he was able to select these players and didn't inherit a team like last year.

"Compared to last year, this year has been easier because I was able to handpick these players," he said, "I got to talk to them, and I got to know these players. And I love them because when they're on the court they have a 'never say die' attitude. In our last game we were down 13 in the fourth quarter and came back to win. They're hardworking players that come from hardworking families."

The Porterville College 2015-16 Women's Basketball Team. Courtesy/PC

Some of the players that Parker was able to bring in are his captains for this year's team - Marisol Cerda, Sydney Tobias, and Maria Lopez. They all talked about what qualities helped them become captains of the team.

"We're dependable," Tobias said, "We'll step in when needed."

Lopez talked about what this team has done successfully over the first few games they have played.

"We play well as a team," she said. "We've worked really well together."

"He taught us to never be content," Cerda said of Parker. "It's never enough and to never be satisfied."

As far as some of the other players for the Pirates are concerned, Parker has seen some good things from them, and a couple have stood out to him so far.

"Lauren Beath is a 5'10" girl that we have. She was a point guard in high school, but she's playing forward here," he said. "She's versatile, she can handle the ball, shoot the three. She has length and can defend pretty well. I also have a couple girls that are real competitive in Jenny Sanchez and Allie Garcia. They're swing guards that are good defenders for us, and they can shoot."

Parker has tried to instill a certain style or system with this team, and he feels like he has the team to execute the offense.

"We want movement on offense," he said. "We don't want to be stagnant with the ball. I want them to adapt to what the game is showing. We also use half-court traps, we can go to man-man defense. We have really good open court players, so we like to get the ball in the open court. We want to stay structured though and adjust."

As a coach Parker just wants to motivate his players to become more versatile on the basketball court, and become all around players on offense and defense.

"The more they learn, the better they'll be, the more versatile they'll become," he said. "We want them to know how to break the full court press, and cover zone. More things can make them enticing to bigger schools that may want them in the future."

Parker has increased expectations for this team, compared to last year's team that only won six games, he also wants to be realistic though.

"We're just focused on getting better possession. We want to build character, and give the players a fighting chance in the real world; help them stand on their own two feet," he said."I want to help them be self confident. Right now we're pretty good, we're confident, and we're building a tradition. We want to verbalize what we do and have building blocks. I think we can be .500."

The Porterville Pirates women's basketball team currently stands at 1-1. They will play their next game on Friday November 20, when they take on El Camino-Compton Center in the Barstow College Tournament.

# WHCC Rodeo Booster Events

West Hills College Coalinga Rodeo Boosters will host a series of barrel racing and roping events at the WHCC Farm of the Future rodeo arena started this month.

The events are open to the public to attend and compete in and serve as an annual fundraiser for the WHCC rodeo.

"It supports the rodeo program by offsetting all kinds of costs, including the Rodeo Boosters Scholarship Program," said Justin Hampton, rodeo coach.

For the 2015-2016 school year, the scholarship program awarded an approximate $23,000 in scholarships to students.

The next event of the series, a barrel racing event will be held on Saturday, November 28 at noon. A roping event will be held on Saturday, December 12 at 9am.

Event winners will receive saddles and buckles.

For more information about the event or registration fees, contact Justin Hampton at 559-934-2702 or justin-hampton@whccd.edu.

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# College of the Sequoias Instructors' Passion Inspired Graphic Designers

**Staff Reports**

JJ Fry took his first graphic design class at College of the Sequoias (COS) just for fun and liked it so much, it launched his career. Bobby Sierra had just moved to the area, knew nothing about computers and struggled with his first graphic design class. Now he is working as a professional graphic designer. The community college, with campuses in Visalia, Tulare and Hanford, opened up career opportunities for them to use their creativity and earn an excellent living.

Both students affirmed that the COS graphic design faculty was both demanding and incredibly supportive, equipping them with skills need to succeed in their careers. "I credit my teachers for kick starting my interest in graphic design," said Fry. "They challenged me to be better and better each week. Their patience and teaching ability is exceptional."

Sierra had a similar experience. "There were times at first when I wanted to quit but the way Mr. DeCaro taught and shared his stories drew me in," said Sierra. "He cared about our success not just in graphic design but in life. I learned how to become more structured, responsible, meet deadlines and pay attention to detail. These essential life skills have helped me in my career just as much as the design skills."

JJ Fry

Graphic Design Instructor, Anthony DeCaro has been at COS for 12 years, taught in high schools and vocation schools for 27 years and was an Art Director with advertising firms. "I bring real world demands and examples into the classroom," said DeCaro. "Graphic design careers are expanding quickly and working with our industry advisory group, we are preparing students for new opportunities in digital design." COS students learn to use the Adobe® Creative Suite, specifically, Illustrator®, InDesign® and Photoshop®.

College of the Sequoias prepares students for Adobe® Certified Associate (ACA) certification, offers a COS graphic design certificate after completing seven courses, and enables students to earn an AA degree after completing general education classes. Students can use what they learn at COS to start their graphic design careers or go on to university earn a BA degree.

Sierra noted that the certificates he earned prepared him to be promoted from a labor worker to graphic designer at Tule River Graphics in Porterville. He creates designs for t-shirts, banner, flyers and signs as well as oversees the production. "I like being able to create something and see the process from concept to final product," said Sierra. "It brings a smile to my face when I see my designs on shirts and vehicles."

Fry works as a graphic designer for Cribbs project and Roller Towne in Visalia, and also takes on freelance projects. He designs logos, postcards and websites as well takes and edits photos for clients' graphics. "I love digital art so everything about graphic design, web design and photography is so much fun that sometimes it doesn't feel like work," said Fry.

Both former students would recommend COS and the graphic design program. "Without my classes at COS, I would have no formal training," said Fry, "And there's no way I would have landed my job."

Sierra also urged students to push themselves to enroll. "If you are passionate about becoming a graphic designer, then you should take the next step and go to school," said Sierra. "What you learn will be beneficial in your future career as a graphic designer, but more importantly, it will change your life."

To learn more about graphic design and other Career Technical Education classes in Business, Agriculture, and Industry & Technology offered at COS, go to www.cos.edu.

# Ruiz Foods Presents $9080 to Kaweah Delta Foundation

**Staff Reports**

On November 5, Ruiz Food Products, Inc., presented Dena Cochran, VP of Development, Kaweah Delta Foundation with a check in the amount of $9080 as a result of the company's first Pink Out Day.

On Wednesday, October 28th, Ruiz Food Products, Inc. participated in October's Breast Cancer Awareness month by hosting their first Pink Out Day by encouraging all team members to wear pink. For everyone that did, Ruiz committed to donating $10 to the Kaweah Delta Foundation. The company had over 908 team members from the Dinuba and Tulare facilities participate raising $9,080.

"I am extremely proud of our Ruiz Food team members. They showed that together, we can help fight and find a cure for this devastating disease," said Blanca Santana, Community Relations, Ruiz Food Products, Inc.

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# Sequoia Union PTC Donates $25,000 For Field Trips

**Staff Reports**

All 325 students at Sequoia Union are ready to travel and explore the state this school year. Thanks to a combined effort of the Parent Teacher Club, staff, students and community, a record amount was raised during the school's annual fall carnival, which was held September 26.

As a result, members of the Parent Teacher Club (PTC) proudly presented a check for $25,000 to the school on Friday following the morning flag salute, when the entire student body gathers together.

Students from kindergarten through eighth grade listened and then cheered as Principal Dr. Jeremy Powell explained that field trips for the entire year are fully funded.

A giant check spelled out the good news and is now on display in the school office. Sequoia Union students travel the state every year with the Classroom On the Go Program. From viewing giant cats and learning about conservation efforts at Sierra Endangered Cat Haven in Dunlap to attending a hands-on laboratory at the Monterey Bay Aquarium, Sequoia Union students take some of the most enriching, curriculum-aligned field trips available.

Sixth graders also attend SCICON, a week-long science camp in Springville at no cost to their families, and eighth graders take a two-night, three day trip to San Francisco, visiting a college campus, Alcatraz, and exploring the city.

The Sequoia Union PTC is a non-profit, 501(c)3 organization that supports Sequoia Union students and staff by funding the school's performing arts programs, the library, educational assemblies, as well as student field trips.

For more information, email ptc@sequoiaunion.org, or call (559) 564-2106.

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